# CHICAGO LEDGER

VOL. XLVIII. NO. 44 CHICAGO, ILL., SATURDAY, OCTOBER 30, 1920 5 CENTS A COPY

Its title is short, but the story itself is long and interesting.

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**"TETCHED"**

* * *

Complete in this number.

# CHICAGO LEDGER

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# Must Have Been the English Monkey

## Says The Editor

THE Editor's wife has on her culinary repertoire a dish called English Monkey. At least that's the only name it has ever gone by in the family, and the only name the family has ever been able to find for it. How it's made the Editor doesn't know, for he belongs to the ilk that prepares a meal by boiling the bacon and frying the coffee, but he does know that English Monkey is half-cousin to the Welsh rarebit, being a fearful, wonderful and delectable combination of cooked cheese.

But, to the story:

The Editor was more or less harassed last night before he dined on this pseudo Welsh rarebit dish. He had been spending the afternoon poring over his printed forms, and trying to evolve suitable changes in the company's rejection slips and acceptance contracts. The stock of forms had given out, and an order had come up from the stock clerk to give out new printing orders and what changes would be necessary. So his head was full of forms F 1496 L, L 1713 E, Yellow Slip SP, which advises authors to send their manuscripts to certain other magazines built along other lines than the Ledger, and Blue Slip S, which goes back to authors who forget the courtesies of inclosing postage and addressed envelopes.

Now, an afternoon of perplexity, added to a dish that is half-cousin to a Welsh rarebit, is a sure recipe for—

But, listen, and you shall hear:

WHEN the editor woke suddenly from sleep last night—or thought that he awoke—he found that he had died, and that his ghost was tapping at the Pearly Gates. A tall man with a book came to the door and told the Editor that there was no chance for him to get in there, on account of his past life, which had been so wicked that it has resulted in nothing less than his having become an Editor. So the Editor, shivering in his gravecloths, sadly turned away from the Pearly Gates, and hot-footed it along a ten-thousand-mile path which was lined with signs that read: "This Way to the Infernal Regions."

The Editor must have traveled rather fast, but he certainly can testify that the temperature between those two regions was some frigid, particularly when one lone ghost is arrayed in nothing but its gravecloth; and he confesses that when he saw the Infernal Regions looming up ahead of him, oozing smoke and sparks, a cheerful glow in the sky up around the walls, he gave a whoop and increased his speed.

A tall individual with horns and a forked tail was waiting at the gate. The Editor, drawing up the robe around his shivering form, started to edge his way in, hastily giving his name and earthly address for the purpose of record. But the tall one with the horns thrust himself squarely in the narrow aperture that led to the Infernal Regions, and held up his hand.

"Sorry," he said. And he thrust out to the Editor a white slip on which a big red number read: F 1496 L.

That numeral seemed somehow familiar to the Editor, and with one last effort to keep from shivering his gravecloth off, he seized the slip and with chattering teeth read its words. To his consternation, they ran:

> Thank you very much for having offered yourself as a candidate for H—l. We regret that you have not been found suitably wicked for occupancy here. While we are at all times glad to examine and interview candidates of both sexes, a candidate to gain entrance must have a record of not less than ten years' wickedness on earth, have broken at least three of the ten commandments, and be calculated to be a regular devil from start to finish. Candidates must appear in fresh grave clothes, have two spots on their heads sandpapered down for horns, supply their own rivet for their tail, and be accompanied by enough energy to carry them away from the gates if rejected. Please note that we don't accept infants, ministers, or editors of religious magazines. Trusting that you will be able to gain entrance in some other department of the other-side-of-the-grave, we are, Very sincerely yours,
>
> MANAGEMENT OF H—L.

THE Editor stared at the closed door. He saw now that he had been wicked enough on earth to get barred from the Pearly Gates, yet not wicked enough to gain entrance in these warm, cozy-looking regions. So he hoofed it back along the long road, and presently found another spirit trudging along trying to make the Infernal Regions.

Now this other spirit had a better gravecloth that the Editor, and the Editor, now realizing that drastic measures were necessary, and not recalling that he had ever stolen anything in his life, promptly knocked the new spirit down, tore off the latter's gravecloth, put it on himself, and left the other one there with his own discarded garment. Considerably revivified by his new burst of wickedness, he straightway turned back in a hurry for the Infernal Regions.

Evidently there was some kind of a wireless system working, for the narrow door was open, and the tall gatekeeper with the forked tail was standing there.

"I'll come in now," said the Editor, smiling up at him.

"You'll stay out!" said the other coldly, and thrusting in the Editor's hand a yellow slip of paper which bore the startling word, SPECIAL PS, read the message:

> SPECIAL.
>
> You have been examined as a candidate for H—l, but by virtue of your innate goodness are not quite suitable for this institution. The undersigned management has, however, thought it advisable to recommend you specifically to the Keeper of the Pearly Gates, address Heaven, and suggest that you submit yourself there, leaving this slip attached. MANAGEMENT H—L.

THE Editor, downcast, turned his footsteps sadly back along the road. It was bitter cold, and he hadn't had even the chance to explain that he had already applied for admission at the Pearly Gates, and had been refused. Halfway back the several-thousand-mile path, he flung down his gravecloth in a fury, stamped upon it and tore it into a thousand shreds, hurling the tatters in every direction. And turning once more on his head, he sped back to H—l, where he beat and kicked with all his might and main upon the narrow door that closed him out in the cold. And without that gravecloth, it was "some cold."

Of a sudden the door opened, and the tall spirit with the horns appeared in the opening. In his hand was a blue slip that looked very familiar, and thrusting it in the hand of the Editor, and giving him a neat backward push that sent him sprawling on his back, closed the door silently. Clutching the slip, the Editor rose up and by the pink glow in the sky read its words. They ran:

> SPECIAL.
>
> In all kindness it is suggested that, other things being equal, the management of H—l is more favorably inclined toward the candidate who comes to the gates attired fully in gravecloth, and accompanied by the necessary sandpapersd spots and tail rivet for use in H—l.
>
> Candidates, to do business in a businesslike way with the Infernal

(Concluded on Page 19.)

# Hot Off the Jokesmith's Anvil

## He Knew It.

George, 3 years of age, appeared on the Easter program at his Sunday school in Greenwood, singing a solo. As he was leaving with his mother, a friend said to him:

"George, you did fine."

"I know it," he returned.

"Why, George, you should not have said that to the lady." Whereupon George answered:

"Well, mother, I guess I could hear my own voice."

## His Experience.

Yeast—I hear Charlie Jiplin is to become a comedy movie actor?

Crimsonbeak—What does he know about acting in the movies?

"Why, he used to work on a pie counter somewheres."

**Impossible.**

A certain judge after passing sentence always gave advice to prisoners. Having before him a man found guilty of stealing he started thus:

"If you want to succeed in this world you must keep straight. Now, do you understand?"

"Well, not quite," said the prisoner; "but if your lordship will tell me how a man is to keep straight when he is trying to make both ends meet, I might."

**Uplift.**

"You poor, poor woman!" exclaimed the lady uplifter. "Can I do anything for you?"

"Yes, ma'am," said the slum dweller. "Set down on that broken chair an' tell me what all them fine clothes of yours cost."

**A Seasonal Call on Uncle.**

In the pawnshop:

"Good morning, Uncle! . . . Can you let me have five on my tennis racquet, golf sticks and bathing suit? Thanks; and here's my spring ticket—better let me have my overcoat."

## How Pat Felt.

At the battle of the Modder River an officer observed Pat taking shelter from the enemy's fire. After the engagement the officer, thinking to take Pat down a peg, said:

"Well, Pat, how did you feel during the engagement?"

"Feel," said Pat. "I felt as if every hair of my head was a band of music and they were all playing 'Home, Sweet Home.'"

**Prepared.**

"Is he what you would call a first-class newspaper man?"

"I should say so. When the 'end of the world' scare was at its height he had two editorials written—one to publish if it did come off and the other if it didn't!"

**No Place Else to Go.**

"Ah, Brother!" exclaimed the Rev. Thirdly, "I'm delighted to see you in church this morning!"

"Yes, daggun it," growled the earthworm. "I slept late and missed the boat!"

**Also Mentioned.**

"You say that you were once mentioned as a presidential possibility?"

"Yes, when I was a small boy I was told that if I was good I might grow up to be President."

**Lacks the Price.**

"Your friend needs a haircut. Is he a poet?"

"No, in his case long hair simply means a short purse."

**True.**

"There's one thing about work."

"What?"

"It makes you enjoy your pleasure so much more."

**No Repeaters There.**

Visitor—Do people often fall over the cliff?

Coast Guard—No, sir; only once.

## Brain Teasers.

**Diamond.**

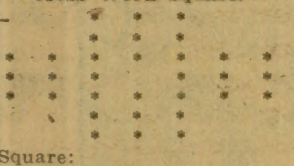
364—1. In crochet.
2. An enemy.
3. A musical instrument.
4. A dandy place to spend your vacation.
5. An old word meaning to addle or earn.
6. Short for "before."
7. In charity.

**Fish Transformations.**

365—1. Change a letter of a fish and find a tree.
2. Change a letter of a fish and find a masculine name.
3. Change a letter of a fish and find condition.
4. Change a letter of a fish and find ignoble.
5. Change a letter of a fish and find counterfeit.
6. Change a letter of a fish and find odor.
7. Change a letter of a fish and find fragile rock.
8. Change a letter of a fish and find keen.

**Cross Word Square.**

366—



Upper Square:
My first is a beverage.
My second we do three times a day.
My third you did to your breakfast.
Left Square:
My first ladies wear around their necks.
My second is used in rowing.
My third is a part of the verb "to be."
Right Square:
My first is in the head.
My second is a word used for "yes."
My third is used to catch sounds.
Lower Square:
My first means before.
My second is a part of a shad that is good to eat.
My third is a slippery snake.

**Double-headed Grain.**

367—1. I am a grain, change my head I am socially agreeable.
2. I am a grain, change my head I am moisture.
3. I am a grain, change my head I am rent.
4. I am a grain, change my head I am a fraud.
5. I am a grain, change my head I am a conference.
6. I am a grain, change my head I light quick blows.

**ANSWERS TO LAST WEEK'S PUZZLES.**

**360. The Concealed Orchestra.**

1. Guitar. 2. Trumpet. 3. Flute. 4. Violin. 5. Harp. 6. Fife.

**361. Versatile Al.**

1. Constitution-AL. 2. Plur-AL. 3. Ve-AL. 4. Rur-AL. 5. Patern-AL. 6. Individu-AL. 7. Refus-AL. 8. Inquisitori-AL.

**362. Four Letter Squares.**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| TICK | COIN | EDEN |
| IDEA | OGRE | DALE |
| CELL | IRIS | ELLA |
| KALE | NEST | NEAT |

**363. Jumbled Names of Fish.**

1. Trout. 2. Halibut. 3. Perch. 4. Bass. 5. Turbot. 6. Sole. 7. Smelt. 8. Shad. 9. Moonfish. 10. Chub. 11. Minnow. 12. Herring.

**It is not desired that readers send in the answers to the puzzles. They are printed simply as brain teasers, and the correct answers will be printed the following week.**

## The Little Cat.

Miss Vera Vaine—My modiste tells me that my figure has exquisite lines.

Miss Tillie Tarte—Speaking of lines, what does your masseuse say of your face?


## TWO BEAUTIFUL DOLLS FREE.

Any little girl or boy wanting two wonderful dolls free can easily get them by distributing some beautiful pictures, highly colored. If you want these dolls be sure and write in to The Doll Department 20, 182 N. Wabash Ave., Chicago, Ill.—Advertisement.

# "TETCHED"

## By F. RONEY WEIR

"I TELL yeh, Scroby, I wouldn't stand for it!" Jed Lawson spoke emphatically, yet cautiously, with an eye on the back porch where a thin, old woman was snapping out dish towels and hanging them to dry in the sun. "The more you let a woman run your business for you the more yeh may."

"Retty ain't never tried to run my business for me," remonstrated old Mr. Scroby, "she's freer from that than most women are."

"She's been dictatin' about your sellin' your buggy hoss, ain't she? Accordin' to your own tell she has, an' you let a woman begin to dictate an' it grows on 'em—grows on 'em like sixty."

"Fur as that's concerned," said old Scroby, "I guess Retty's habits and mine are pretty well established by now; she's 69 and I'm 72, come third of this month. A year from last July it'll be fifty years since we was married. And she's one of the best women a man ever had. Best nurse in sickness an' the best cook in health. She has got one or two traits I wisht she didn't have—sayin' things that makes a feller so allfired mad——!" Scroby broke off suddenly. He did not intend to talk over family matters with seedy, gossipy, no-account old Jed Lawson and have his and Retty's inconsequential disagreements "horned from one end of town to t'other."

It was a temptation, however, to unburden himself to a sympathetic listener, and Jed played his fish adroitly. He had scented trouble the moment Scroby stepped into the garden, and he was full of a cruel curiosity.

"Well, I ain't got no wife and don't want one—agin," he began. "Tried married life for awhile and made up my mind I'd ruther have a little more freedom."

Scroby made no reply. He knew all about Jed Lawson's matrimonial venture and that however remiss Mrs. Lawson might have been as a wife her remissness was as nothing to Jed's as a husband and provider. Scroby was hoeing with a jerky energy which in time would have worked off his anger and restored his normal attitude of kindliness toward his wife if only Jed had let him alone, but Jed knew that Scroby was disturbed, and knew also that sooner or later he should find out what the trouble was.

"If that old Dawl mare was mine I'd git shet of her as soon as I could," he flung out as a cautious feeler. "I wouldn't care what my wife said agin it." Scroby said nothing. "Women don't understand the cold facts about the hoss values of today. Hosses ain't what they was ten year ago, and they're goin' down in price every hour. I'd sell no matter what my wife said."

"She ain't said much against sellin' Doll," said Scroby, and Jed saw that he was on the wrong track. He would have to back up and begin at the starting point for a new tack. He did so and inadvertently stumbled into luck with a generality.

"Well, women's funny," he announced.

"You bet they be," conceded Scroby, and leaned on his hoe.

"Yes, sir, you bet they be," repeated Jed. Both men looked toward the back porch where four creamy dish towels swayed in the sun.

"Now, this mornin'," went on Scroby with a confidential suppression of tone, at which Jed knew that he had won and pricked an ear for the confession, "this mornin' my wife said something that made me mad as lightnin'!"

"Said that you was lazy, I s'pose, and that you oughter do this little patch of ground without hirin' help—that's what my wife allers used to be firin' at me—that I was lazy——"

"No," interrupted old Scroby, "Retty didn't say I was lazy, because I ain't lazy an' Retty knows I ain't, and I know I ain't. If she said I was lazy it wouldn't uv hurt me one bit. It's when you're twitted of something that's more or less so—that's what hurts."

Jed Lawson cleared his throat, and his large ears took on an extra tinge of red. Scroby hoed on ahead of Jed. His pointed white chin whisker trembled from the combined effects of his strenuous labor and his inward emotions. Jed chopped along behind. He preferred to hoe in Scroby's garden when Scroby was busy somewhere else. It did away with this nervous necessity of keeping up; gave more time for reflection.

"Well, what did your wife say?" he inquired pantingly when they both reached the end of the rows farthest from the house.

"She said," whispered Scroby, "that in her opinion, I was tetched!"

"You—tetched! Why, the dum old——"

"Hold up, Jed, hold up, I won't stand for a word agin' Retty! She was right; I am tetched!"

"Fiddle-strings! I don't see any signs of it. A man who oversees his own big farm and this big market garden in town——"

"Yes-s-s, but you can't tell about such things," cautioned Scroby. "My Uncle Abner Hall on my mother's side preached for two year after he begun to wind wire. Nobody dreamed there was anything wrong; used to preach powerful sermons, an' he done lots of good thru this period of his career, too, an' then he'd go home and set and wind wire till bedtime. But one Sunday he begun to wind wire right in the pulpit, and then, of course, it was all off. They sent him to the crazy asylum."

"Wire!" ejaculated Jedd, "Well, well!"

"When a man begins to git tetched," went on Scroby, "he gits one idear in his head and can't git it out. He thinks of it first thing in the morning and the last thing at night; he wakes up with it an' goes to sleep with it. That's the first symptom, an' I've got it!"

JED LAWSON was intensely interested. He loved horrors of any sort. Once, when a woman had been killed on the railroad bridge while Jed was painting Hanneford's barn a mile out in the country, and the driver of a milk wagon brought the news, Jed had left his ladder and run the mile in ten minutes. He was, of course, too late to witness the most grewsome details of the affair, but what he did see repaid him for his effort, altho he strained an artery somewhere in the region of his heart, which had caused that organ to run "sort er hitchety" ever since.

"Is it wire?" he demanded with eager interest.

"No," said Scroby, "it ain't wire," and began to show symptoms of intensive cultivation once more. Jed spurred to usual activity in order to keep within conversational distance of his employer.

"Don't you know, Scroby, the best plan in the world is to talk a thing like that over with somebody? If you keep such notions

"Hold Up, Jed, Hold Up; I Won't Stand for a Word Agin' Retty!"

bottled up inside yourself they grow an' grow till they git yeh. Ain't that so? But if you make a clean breast of 'em to somebody else and kindah laugh at 'em, and let somebody else laugh at 'em with you, why they just nat'chlly fade out and leave you alone, see?"

Lonzo was struck by Jed's logic. He hesitated. Jed realized that he had won his point.

"But you'll tell it all over town, Jed, and folks here who remember about Uncle Abner will say, 'I knowed how it would turn out.'"

"I won't mention it to a soul," promised Jed. "As you know, Scroby, I ain't got no wife to worm it out of me. It's your married man that you want to look out how you tell things to. Now I wouldn't trust you round a fence corner with a secret of mine if I didn't want your wife to know all about it."

"Well, I allers have told Retty about everything," owned Scroby, "and she gen'lly tells me everything; and that's how we've managed to git along so well for most fifty years—over fifty, if you count the courtin' period. And in all that time she's never said as mean a thing to me as she did this mornin' when I made a suggestion an' says she to me, 'W'y Lonzo Scroby, you must be a little bit tetched!' I'd been afraid of that myself for weeks. I'd kept sayin' to myself over an' over, 'You're a goner! You've got a crazy notiion just as your Uncle Abner had, and you'll bring up in the crazy house just as he did!'"

"Now what's your notion? Spit it out," urged Jed. "I won't tell a soul, anyhow not till they start with you for the asylum."

Scroby groaned. Jed's suggestion cut across his spirit like a knife. Strange that such terrible things could happen in a pleasant world! The sunlight fell athwart the grateful rows of vegetables; the black and white cat sat in a contented bunch on the back porch; Retty was bustlingly taking in the renewed dish towels—everything comfortable and sane and just as it should be except him with his crazy notion and Jed with his suggestion of that future tragic journey. He remembered the day they had dragged Uncle Abner away—well—there was no use dwelling on that!

"I'm old," began Scroby, "I'll be 72 in October, but—I've took a notion to buy an automobile an' run 'er clean to the Pacific Ocean!"

There was a visible letdown in Jed Lawson's expectant attitude.

"I think about it every day," went on Scroby, "an' I dream about it every night. Now when a man almost 72 year old, a man that's never been furder from his farm than to this place an' back agin except once to the Coxton fair an' once to Willett on that Smith lawsuit; a man that never was in one of them things but once in his life an' then just round the pust office corner an' got right out again, an' his legs trembled so when he got out that his very coat-tails shook; I say, when such a man takes to dreamin' of drivin' one of 'em over hill an' over dale, medders an' mountains, lime-kilns an' little creeks—w'y, he's tetched, an' there's no dodgin' on it!"

"When did yeh feel this come on first?" inquired Jed with a professional air.

"That same day," confessed Scroby. "That day that young Jones switched around my corner out yander an' says he, 'Where you headin' for, Mr. Scroby?' 'Pust office,' says I. He swung open his little black door an' says he, 'Jump in.' I jumped in, an' before I could git the door clamped to, there we was at the pust office an' my old hat was back in the road about sixty rod——"

"It took you right then an' there, did it?" asked Jed, still with the air of a specialist who had been called upon a most interesting case.

"Yep, right then an' there. I walked back after my hat an' forgot to go to the pust office altogether."

Jed burst into laughter. "Why, man alive, you're as sound as a winter pippin! You ain't crazy! Them symptoms just go to show that you ain't petrified. Every man in town has had them symptoms you're speakin' of—I've got 'em myself. If I had the price I'd hit the gravel for a auto dealer's place and have me a car before sundown. But there it is! Young Jones can have a car—two thousand, they say his father paid for his'n——"

"Merciful lightnin'!" breathed Scroby.

"——an' young Smith can have a car, an' Furgeson an' Beals—what chance have I, do you s'pose—me, a laborin' man! And I can handle a wheel, too, you betchah, with the best of 'em. I learned how in the livery stable last summer drivin' supply for Jim Conner when he had his arm broke."

"Then you don't think that I'm——"

"Pah! No! It just goes to show that you ain't petrified—not yet. A man that works day in an' day out on one farm for sixty odd years; never goes nowhere an' never spends nothin' nor sees nothin', gits petrified usually; gits so he wouldn't cross the road to go to a circus. Honest, he does, an' the wonder is that you ain't petrified long ago. This here yearnin' for a little jant to the Pacific Coast merely shows that you're alive yet. It's Nature's way of balancin' you, an', I swan, if you don't heed it like as not you will go batty like your Uncle Abner."

AGAIN Lonzo Scroby was struck by the soundness of Jed's reasoning. Jed had been a fool and a wastrel in the ordering of his own life, but sometimes that sort of man was well able to see the weak spots in the life of another.

"'Tain't as if you couldn't afford it," went on Jed. "The price of two or three steers would buy a good stanch little machine that would hike over the road like a hound dog on a hot trail. Why, say, wouldn't it be the greatest trip on earth?"

Lonzo Scroby suddenly felt the breeze of travel ruffling his gray hair; a long-absent youthful glitter shone in his water blue eyes, until the remembrance of Retty's acceptance of the idea again flooded over him.

"She wouldn't go; never in the world," he sighed.

"She wouldn't have to," said Jed.

"Well, she wouldn't consent to my settin' out alone—never!"

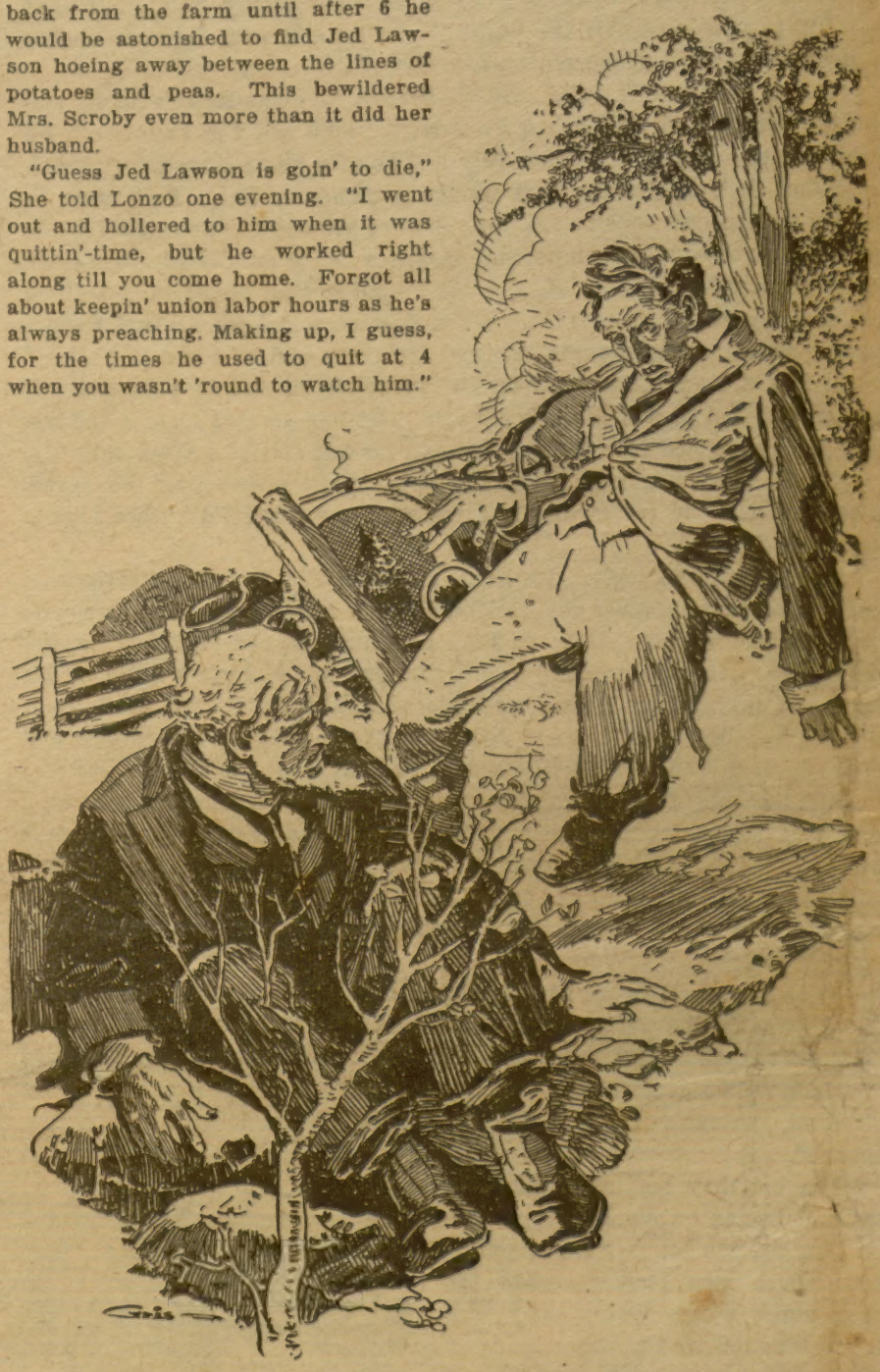
"You needn't set out alone. If the worst come to the worst, I could arrange things so'st to go with yeh. In fact, you'd have to take a shover; you couldn't drive the car—that is, at first you couldn't. But you'd soon learn."

"But Retty——"

"See here," broke in Jed, "a woman's judgment is all right in regards to kettles an' pans; when it comes to man's affair's it ain't wuth a turnip! The time ain't fur off when every man will own a automobile—every man that ain't petrified. W'y, count the machines in this town; yes, an' count your neighbors up around your farm that's got 'em. You'll have to come to it in time—you'll just have to git one or else own up to bein' petrified. And then think how your wife will suffer while you're learnin'; she'll be scared to flitters. An' say' you wife will suffer while you're learnin'; she'll be scared to flitters. An' say' you was preachin' to me the other day about bein' merciful to beasts; now why not be merciful to your own wife? Git your machine and take your trip unbeknownst to her, an' come home a skilful shover without any anxiety on her part, then ask her out to ride an' I'll bet she'll go a hoppin'. Come now, Scroby, think this over. I'll back yeh in the hull proceedin', and you'll never be sorry you took the plunge."

In place of being healed by his open confession, Scroby's malady grew upon him, carefully fostered by Lawson whose fingers ached to clasp a wheel once more. Old Scroby's obsession was as nothing to his which had dominated him ever since his experience with the auto 'bus. He had considered it a hopeless passion, but now, thru the medium of Scroby's steers, he beheld a vision of himself and his old employer whirling across field and stream, himself at the wheel, Scroby paying the bills. During this period he became noticably faithful to the Scroby garden. His usual method was to work one day and lay off two, but now he came every day. On occasions when Scroby did not get back from the farm until after 6 he would be astonished to find Jed Lawson hoeing away between the lines of potatoes and peas. This bewildered Mrs. Scroby even more than it did her husband.

"Guess Jed Lawson is goin' to die," She told Lonzo one evening. "I went out and hollered to him when it was quittin'-time, but he worked right along till you come home. Forgot all about keepin' union labor hours as he's always preaching. Making up, I guess, for the times he used to quit at 4 when you wasn't 'round to watch him."



**As He Sat Up in a Dazed Condition He Saw Something Fearful Revolving in the Air Like a Tumbleweed or a Flopping, Wounded Crane.**

As a matter of fact, Retty was Lawson's great problem. Her far-seeing eyes and quick judgment stood in the road of his desires. Without intending to do so she seemed always coming to the back door to shake a rug or a dishcloth or a broom just as Jed had unfolded a brand new catalog of desirable cars beneath the avid eyes of old 'Lonzo Scroby, and he would be obliged to scrunch it into his pocket and await a better opportunity to display it.

During a rainy week—too rainy for garden work—Scroby received a letter (blotted and poorly written) which, after reading, he put hurriedly into the kitchen stove. His doing so attracted Retty's attention, whereas if he had thrown it on to the sitting-room table, or left it on the window-sill as usual for his wife to clear away, the chances are that she would not even have taken the trouble to read it. As it was she forgot all about putting the missive into the stove until the next morning when she took up the ashes before lighting her fire and found the letter, charred a bit about the edge, but practically intact. Lonzo had not taken into account the low state of the fire when he had thrown the letter into the stove. Retty read the letter. She had always read all of Lonzo's letters, as he read all of hers. His invariably consisted of—"Dear Sir: We are sending you under separate cover our new mixture for the extermination of"—well, some one or other of the many pests with which the Lord sees fit to discipline farmers and market gardeners. Her own letters always began: "Dear Ma and Pa," and related how George had graduated, or Mary was engaged, or Ben had had his wages raised. Or they were from Lonzo's sister Ruth, or her own sister Hannah and spoke of rheumatism or neuralgia (both diseases misspelled).

(Continued on Page 10.)

# The Man Whom God Sent

By Edgar White

GEORGE CLAYTON, attorney for the Essex Trust Company, was expecting a visitor. He didn't seemed pleased over the anticipated meeting. You couldn't blame him. The man coming was, until recently, No. 4489, otherwise Lone Jim, alias Colorado Slim, et al, just completed eight years for burglary and attempting to kill the sheriff on his way to liberty, but who was shot and seriously injured by a deputy.

When Lone Jim was dressed in eight years ago he was cataloged a "bad egg." It had taken some years of professional activity for Lone Jim to get that rating with the authorities.

Eight years before Lone Jim and Tattooed Bill cut some lead pipe from the bathroom in the old jail at Essex and attacked the sheriff when he came in with their evening mess. Bill knocked the sheriff out and got away, but Lone Jim was shot thru the breast by a deputy. A decent citizen would have died from a wound like that.

Clayton was among the crowd attracted to the hullabaloo at the jail, and he entered the cell where Lone Jim was supposed to be dying. He laid a hand on the wounded robber's head and said some soothing words. The others in the curious crowd seemed mainly interested in the fact that the outlaw "had got his," which they said was in accord with justice.

Lone Jim's narrow eyes opened and he studied intently the man who had showed a little compassion. It looked like he was photographing Clayton's face in his mind. Then the narrow eyes closed. The crowd departed, anticipating an interesting session at the inquest on the morrow.

But there was no inquest. In a few days the doctor yanked the bullet out of Lone Jim's back with a pair of pinchers. The bad man refused to take an anasthetic, but sat with his breast to the back of a chair, around which he wrapped his arms, while he clutched his old pipe between his teeth.

Lone Jim claimed the blood-clotted ball, saying he had paid the price for it.

Clayton recalled the day the robber had spoken to him after receiving his long sentence in the pen. With his stubby beard, narrow eyes and tattered garb he was almost as hard a looker as a villain in the movies.

"May I write to you?"

Clayton looked up and smiled.

"Sure," he replied, and he extended a friendly hand to the bad man.

That was all.

Lone Jim wrote occasionally to his one friend on earth, and Clayton sent him papers and magazines. Now and then the convict would make small requests for a fountain pen, some undergarments and certain books. Clayton sent them, and as inclination came would write him cheer-up letters. He didn't lecture, just tried to encourage the convict to think that when released he could get a job, and work up to an honored name.

In those days Clayton was somewhat noted for his way of helping the underdog. Among his proteges were tramps, magdalens, young men who had been boy crooks, fellows who had freakish ideas and a number of older men who had been desperate criminals. It seemed like the whole fraternity of down-and-outers knew him.

That was when Clayton's wife was alive. So thoroly happy had Madeline made him that he felt sorry for those who had no such beautiful home ties. But the Lord had taken Madeline from him four years ago, and the world had gone dark.

As Clayton walked about his office chewing a cigar he wished Lone Jim hadn't taken the notion of coming back to Essex. Of cours, the convict would be wanting to borrow money, and Clayton's financial affairs were in desperate straits; so desperate that unless he produced $5,000 before Saturday night the trust company would find out all about a certain claim he had collected last month, and had not turned in. Clayton never did those things when Madeline was alive, but when a trusted friend had shown him a get-rich investment, he had borrowed the collection from the trust company, intending to repay it out of his profits. The trusted friend had made an elaborated explanation, and said the profits would be in next month. But the trust company would want to know about its money Saturday night. That much was pretty certain.

A while back the prompt raising of $5,000 wouldn't have given Clayton much concern. But of late financial people had a way of looking at him queerly when he spoke of getting "accommodations." They knew of mortgages, deeds of trust, and overdue bills, of mysterious journeys from town, and they observed the haunted look that gradually overcast the lawyer's face. Still no one believed him crooked, but his affairs were in such a confused shape that were any questionable transactions disclosed the pack would be on him.

Clayton knew he was walking on the edge of things. He had no mind to talk of the uplift to a convict. Why, he was next door to being a convict himself! He shuddered as he thought of that.

In some of his letters Lone Jim wrote about a little farm he had bought, or was going to buy in Texas, and settle down. The remainder of his life he would "live on the square." They all say that. After serving out their turn, they stand around a few days in their new clothes, smoke cigars and after a try or two at a job, get restless and go back on the old lay. Lone Jim would do the same, of course. He was too old to reform. People wouldn't give him a decent job, and he would certainly go back. Clayton was strangely indifferent as to whether he did or not. His own troubles weighed heavier on him than what the future had for Lone Jim.

"Confound that fellow! What the mischief does he want back here? I should think he'd be glad to stay away from this town. Why don't he go to that little Texas farm he's always gabbing about?"

Clayton had been pacing up and down in his office and as he glanced out of the window he noted the special watchman on duty at night while some repairs were being made in the trust company's vault. If that watchman were not there it would be an easy matter to get into the concern's strong box. An artist like Lone Jim——

Clayton stoppd. He reached for another cigar, lit it and flung himself into a chair. And this is the way his thoughts ran:

"I would give the company my personal check on a New York bank for $5,000 tomorrow to make good the collection. They know I used to carry an account at that bank and would ask no questions. The money is all they want. At night I'd mail a special delivery to Castleray asking to hold the check, that the money to take it up was on the way, and he'd be glad to do it. The watchman—old man Jarvis—could be easily handled as he passes the dark alley behind the building. Lone Jim's the very man for the job—and I could help him! It's the only way out, and it can't fail! It can't fail! There'll be $50,000 in that old safe tomorrow night! Jim, boy—it's the chance of a lifetime!"

THERE was a knock at the door. Clayton promptly got up and opened it. On the threshold stood the man—No. 4489—his hair a trifle gray, but his face was astonishingly improved and the eyes were clear and looked steadily.

"I saw a light up here and thought I'd drop in if you were not busy," said the convict; "you got my letter?"

"Yes, and was mighty glad to hear from you, Jim. You're looking remarkably well."

The convict smiled, and his whole face seemed illuminated. Clayton could hardly realize this man was the tough-looking prisoner whom he had seen in the courtroom eight years ago. Why, anybody would set him down as some prosperous business man.

"I've learned how to take care of myself," said Lone Jim as he seated himself. The reason I came here was I felt that I ought to thank you for being so good to me while I was—down there."

"That's all right, Jim—was glad to be of a little service to you. And while you're here I've got a plan that you may be interested in."

Lone Jim waited for the other to go on, but Clayton said:

"Tell me first about yourself. Then I'll talk to you about this other matter."

The convict took off his hat and ran his hand thru his short gray hair. His expression was grave, which Clayton attributed to the bitter life he had been living in the State's prison.

"You remember the night you came to me in the cell?"

Clayton nodded.

"We thought you were all in, Jim," he said.

"But I didn't," returned the convict. "I knew that I was going to pull thru, but I suffered—my God! How I suffered that night! You were the only one who seemed to know, and I wouldn't show the others, if it killed me!"

There was a resolute note in his voice, but no trace of anger. In his letters, for some time past, the convict had discarded the slang of his kind, and Clayton was not surprised at his improvement in language.

"While there I thought of you—the one man in all the world who seemed to care—and I made up my mind to ask you to write. When you shook hands and agreed to do this I knew I was saved. Your letters and the good books and magazines—I can almost remember them by heart. I'll wager those magazines were never read closer by any subscriber. They opened my eyes. I got a new angle of life. You remember one of the books you sent me was a dictionary. Whenever I ran across a word I didn't understand I looked it up. I got so that I knew the meaning of every word I read. Then I learned that crime was not so much a matter of a bad heart as of ignorance. Most people who are crooked don't know any better. The educated man knows that it pays to be straight."

Clayton moved uneasily, wondering where all this was leading to. He hadn't expected anything like this. Maybe Lone Jim was just repeating something he had heard the chaplain say, and when he got thru his little speech and came back to earth he'd be willing to listen to the music of that $50,000 over in the old safe.

He Laid a Hand On the Wounded Robber's Head and Said Some Soothing Words.

"Of course, this sounds odd from a man who was a burglar and sandbagger for fifteen years, but I see the way now," and there was an earnestness in the convict's voice that carried conviction. "If a man were to place a pistol at my head and say, 'You go back to the old life or I'll kill you!' I'd tell him to pull the trigger."

Clayton turned white. It seemed like the man had read his thoughts. The next observation was even more startling:

"And I want to say to you, Mr. Clayton," the man from the pen went on with increasing impressiveness, "that all I am, or may ever be, is due to you. You are the man God sent to me in that black cell. You spoke the words that got me to thinking. It was your hand upon my jumping forehead that cooled me and took away all thoughts of revenge. It was your letters to me, the books and papers you sent, and all the kindnesses you showed me that brought me back, and when I stand up there"—in his impulsiveness he arose and held his arm aloft—"I'm going to point to you as the man who saved a soul for God! And now it's up to me to save others as you saved me!"

The convict was evidently saying something that had been on his mind for months. The words flowed like a torrent. No one could doubt the man's sincerity. Clayton was trembling. He had heard of convictions of sin, had seen men and women suddenly seized with an impulse at meetings, when they would arise from the mourner's bench singing and shouting. But he had never seen anything like this. The thing that was welling up from the convict's soul had been there for years. No sudden emotion like that. It was fixed. Then came the appalling thought: Here was a man he was supposed to have saved. What would he think when he heard his benefactor was a thief? If he could have kept that knowledge from Lone Jim by blowing out his own brains Clayton knew that he would solve it that way. But that wouldn't help. The convict would see him branded as a felon before the week was out. Then what would he say as he stood before the Judgment Bar?

"You've heard of my little farm," and Lone Jim reseated himself and began talking quietly. "Well, it's a pretty big farm now—160 acres. I bought it little by little. Made statues and little things in soft stone, which visitors bought. Then the warden gave me some little work on the side. I got together a few hundred dollars, and invested it in lands advertised in one of the magazines you sent me."

"You said you were going to farm," remarked Clayton dully.

Lone Jim smiled.

"Yes," he returned, "but it happened my farm was in the oil belt. They made a big strike not long ago—see here." He pulled a packet from his pocket. There were some papers and a certificate of deposit. Clayton glanced at this, and then looked at Lone Jim with dilated yes.

"You mean you have $100,000 on deposit down there?" he asked hoarsely.

"I've got it in my name," replied Lone Jim, "but half of it belongs to my partner."

"You have a partner?"

"Yes," smiled the man from the pen, "his name is George Clayton."

## TEACH ME TO PLAY.

"TEACH me to play," the Maiden gushed,
Then slyly hung her head.
The long-necked, old professor's face lit up,
And inquiringly he said:
"Some rhythmic symphony of olden time?
Some old sonatta or some lay sublime?
Beethoven—Mendelssohn?" A look, almost divine,
Shone on his face. "These hands— this brain of mine—
Are at your service. Only say
What you desire to learn, and, if I may,
I'll do my best to teach you, Miss, to play."

"Teach me to play, I said,"
The maiden cried, when he had done.
With scorn she looked at him,
And fiercely chewed her gum.
"I want something with class! with jazz! with pep!
Those old, long-whiskered birds, that's dead,
Give me a pain. I guess I'd better step,"
And with a toss she left the room.
"I want to learn to play," she said.

—Life.

# The Dark Mirror

## By Louis Joseph Vance

### CHAPTER XLIII.
### RESURRECTION.

SOMEBODY chuckled hoarsely. Chairs were shifted. Asides were exchanged in audible murmurs. A contemptuous voice declared loudly: "It's Nora, all right, all right!" The Nut bent his mouth to mumble into the ear of Inez something apparently in the nature of a remonstrance. She heard him with a surly face, growled a response which seemed to irritate him exceedingly, and turned scornfully away. English Addie alone changed neither her pose nor the moderately dubious expression with which she was regarding Priscilla.

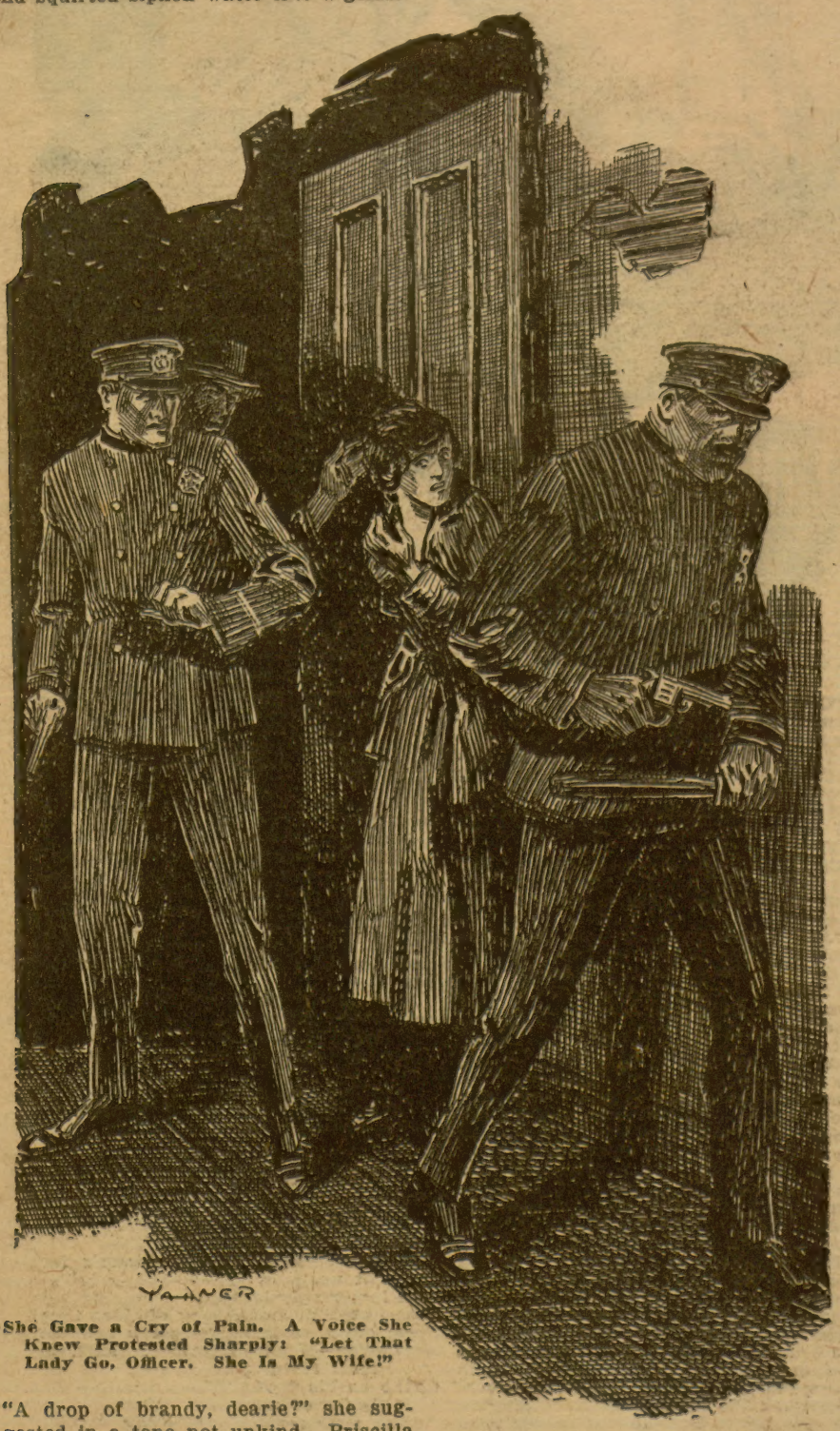
The latter, drawing upon an unexpected store of latent spirit, moved forward to the edge of the table.

"My name is Priscilla Maine," she uttered with difficulty. "I—I——"

"My Gawd!" Inez commented dramatically—"she admits it!"

"Please!" Priscilla pleaded—"I can hardly speak—give me something to drink—water."

English Addie sat forward sharply and squirted siphon water into a glass.



She Gave a Cry of Pain. A Voice She Knew Protested Sharply: "Let That Lady Go, Officer. She Is My Wife!"

"A drop of brandy, dearie?" she suggested in a tone not unkind. Priscilla shook her head. "You'd better," the woman insisted; "you need it." She tilted a bottle over the glass, coloring the water with the liquor. Despairing of getting what she wanted, too thirsty to permit of long hesitation, Priscilla put the glass to her lips and drank.

"Everybody sit tight," Inez warned; "the big bunk act is about to commence."

Priscilla lowered the glass, nodded her thanks to the Englishwoman, and with something remotely resembling defiance again confronted her captors.

"I am Priscilla Maine," she stated for the second time. "What do you want with me?"

The Nut tipped his chair back and eyed her quizzically. "An even break," he replied.

"And no more shenanigan," Inez supplemented.

Priscilla looked blank. "I don't understand——"

"Ah—cut out the stallin'!" Inez flared. "I'm gettin' sick of your airs and everythin'!"

"I don't understand," Priscilla repeated patiently, ignoring the interruption. "I'm not the woman you believe me to be." She addressed herself directly to Harry: "I told you that this afternoon. If you had made the inquiries I asked you to, you could have satisfied yourself I was telling the truth. As it is, you have done this thing—kidnaped me—laid yourselves open to the law——"

"We'll take our chances with the law," Inez put in, sardonic. "But don't mind me; you int'rust us strangely. Go on, go on."

"But even if I were Leonora—assume that I am—what do you want with me?"

"An even break," Harry iterated—"fair play and no more stalling."

"Please explain what you mean—and let me go."

"Fat chance," Inez commented.

## Newest Turns in the Story

**MOTHER O'MORE,** with whom the girl Leonora had at one time lived. Priscilla, encouraged, worked and played night and day—and took sleeping potions, so that the dreams might not come. Standing one day in front of her framed picture in an art gallery window, she came face to face with Harry the Nut and Inez. This time it was no dream! She was facing two real persons. And they appeared to recognize her as Leonora.

But, again she was visited by Harry Chilvers. And again she got rid of him, going to her art studio. She brewed herself a cup of tea, never knowing that Chilvers had 'phoned the "gang," and had followed her. With the first cup she drank, she sank into unconsciousness, and when she awoke she was in a dirty room with Inez, who stripped her of her clothing and gave her a few dirty rags to wear. Inez told her that while she had left her teapot boiling, the "gang" had entered the window and dropped opium into it. From the room Priscilla was led to a larger room where the gang was assembled, accused, as Leonora, her denial received with incredulity and sarcasm, of double-crossing her companions.

This story began in No. 37 of the Ledger for Sept. 11. Back copies may be obtained from our agents or newsdealers.

am ill, unfit to stand on my feet or talk to you—but if you will only let me go, I promise to keep this outrage to myself. The police need never know if——"

"You can go, maybe," Harry responded, "when we've come to an understanding and you've satisfied us you'll act in good faith and not try any more foolishness."

"Won't you please explain?"

"Ah! you know perfectly well——!" Inez began.

With a sharp explosion of temper Harry silenced her. "Be quiet! If you want us to get anywhere with this talk—keep quiet. If you go on like this, you'll only make her stubborn."

"That's right," English Addie advised. "Give Nora a chance, dearie."

INEZ meditated mutiny, thought better of it, subsided into a fit of sulks.

"I'm sure it's simple enough," Harry proceeded loftily, with something of the condescension of one humoring a willful child. "I'm sure you understand what we want, Nora; but if you insist I'll try to put it in words of one syllable. . . . We're all old pals of yours, and we feel we've got a right to be let in on the ground floor when you've struck it rich like you have. We want a chance to work in with you and cop out something for ourselves. You've got the inside track now—God knows how you worked it, but you did—you've got it, you can go where you want and do about as you please with the Ritz mob. And that makes it simple for you to open things up for us. You know what we can do, each one of us; you can easy slip us a tip now and then and leave the rest to us. You needn't be afraid of us givin' the show away as long as you keep us happy and all like that. All I ask for myself, for instance, is a few introductions; I'll take care of the rest."

"I think you must be mad!" Priscilla's head was swimming again; she was clutching the edge of the table with both hands in order to keep her feet. "Was it to tell me this that you—you——"

"Precisely," Harry assented with an amiable nod.

For an instant she was dumb perforce. Then the vertigo beginning to pass, and with it the fear of fainting again; she found fresh confidence and was visited by an inspiration of cunning.

"If I refuse——"

"You'll get twenty-four hours to think it over," the Nut replied. "If by that time you're still stubborn . . ."

"Yes?"

"It'll be very unpleasant for you, Nora, ve-ry unpleasant indeed."

"And, if I agree?"

"We'll put our heads together and scheme out a working arrangement."

"But I'm too ill tonight. . . ."

A gleam dawned in the ugly little eyes of the Nut.

"That sounds like you mean to come down to earth."

Priscilla inclined her head: "I will do what you wish——"

"Sensible young woman!"

"But I'm unable to discuss details tonight."

"You can go back and lie down till you feel stronger."

"No. I can't stay here. You must let me go home."

Inez laughed aloud.

"Hardly, my dear," Harry said. "You won't get another chance to give me the slip until the cases are all framed and I'm satisfied you won't dare try it again."

"You'll have to take my word sometime—now or later."

"Sorry—no can do."

English Addie interposed: "But we all know Leonora never went back on her word."

"Never," Priscilla affirmed; and had wit enough to refrain from throwing a look of gratitude to this new-found ally.

"That's right." Charlie the Coke was speaking. "Nora's always been on the square. 'Sides, the way I look on it it's like this: It's a deadlock; each of you's got to trust the other or——"

"Ah, for Gawd's sake!" Inez protested in disgust. "You make me weary. If you think you can trust that double-faced cat any further'n you can see her——"

"I don't ask you to trust me," Priscilla explained; "only to give me time to rest in quiet and comfort—not here—before we go into our plans. And you need not trust me; I'm willing that one of you shall come with me and see that I play fair. You can trust Addie."

"That's perfectly fair," the Englishwoman insisted. "I'll go with Nora, and you know me well enough to know she won't lift 'er 'and without me seein' it."

"All right," the Nut conceded. "Take Addie home with you and give me your word you'll be ready to see me at 11 tomorrow——"

Inez flounced to her feet in a rage. "You pack of poor boobs!" she shrilled. "Can't you see she's only framin' to slip you the double-cross—and you all helpin' her!"

"One thing more," Priscilla insisted, as if she had not heard; "I must have my things back—my suit, my blouse, my jewelry."

"Hello!" Harry sat forward, eying her sharply. "Thought you looked different. What's become of your clothes?"

Priscilla's nod indicated Inez. "She stole them from me. Make her give them back."

The Nut turned to Inez, scowling blackly. "If that's true——"

"It's true, right enough," Inez challenged him pertly."

"Give them back——"

"Yes, I will—not. I got a bromide enlargement of me bein' such a simp."

"You'll do as I say," Harry insisted darkly. "I'm runnin' this show——"

"You are—like hell!"

The girl's defiance found an echo in a new voice at the back of the room.

"Like hell is right!"

There was a concerted turning of startled heads.

The door had opened noiselessy. It framed the figure of a man wearing a greasy, red sweater, hiked up at either hip to permit his hands to remain in the pockets of a pair of tattered, frayed and stained khaki trousers. His pose was rudely nonchalant. A cap of gray cloth pulled well forward shadowed his eyes; but the face stamped with an evil, mirthless grin, was unmistakable.

After a moment's relish of the dramatic sensation effected by his unheralded resurrection, Red Carnehan slouched in, closed the door with a kick of his heels, and put his shoulders to it.

"It'll take a smarter guy'n you are or ever will be, Harry," he asserted in a blurred voice of arrogance, "to boss this bunch as long's I'm on top of the map."

### CHAPTER XLIV.
### THE HAUNTED MAN.

STUPEFIED silence held till shattered by a laugh of uncouth joy.

"Red!" Inez cried, jumping up and overturning her chair. "Red Carnehan! My Gawd, Red, you've come back!"

"I'll say I have."

Grinning the gunman slouched toward toward the table.

Unanimous impulse brought his friends to their feet and made their astonishment extravagantly vocal—and largely profane. They crowded about Carnehan, shaking his hands, slapping his back, screaming and bellowing a hundred phrases of congratulation, delight and amazement, together with questions innumerable. He suffered the ovation, laughing, greeting each by name, yielding his hands to one after another.

Elbowed and shouldered aside and forgotten, Priscilla had opportunity to remark evidences of an advanced stage of drunkenness in the man, in his uncertain feet and aimless exaggeration of gesture, in the thickness of his tongue and the abnormal glitter of his eyes, in his twitching features and the congestion of blood that darkened his face. He had been drinking not only heavily but long and steadily.

If further evidence of that were wanting, Carnehan supplied it with a sharp, unprovoked spasm of irritation. Without warning he began to strike down the fawning hands and thrust his way thru the group toward the table.

"Lay off me!" he snarled. "Lay off—gimme air! I'll bean the next guy what put his hands onto me! Lay off!"

"But, Red!" Addie protested, "we thought you was dead!"

"You wasn't far wrong, at that." Carnehan seized the brandy bottle and chattered its neck against a glass into which he spilled the raw spirit lavishly. "I might's well 've been, where I was."

"Where was you then?" Inez demanded.

"Layin' up in a garage run by a friend'r mine, over'n Jersey, up near the State line—deadest jay dump in the world, if y' ask me." Still holding the bottle by the neck, he raised the glass, half filled with undiluted brandy. "Well—happy days!"

The drink at his lips, his gaze, roving above the brim, discovered and was transfixed by the pale, set face of Priscilla. He started violently. As it an invisible but mighty hand had struck him a crashing blow, he staggered back, lost his footing, brought up heavily against the table. Bottle and glass, escaping his palsied grasp, crashed to the floor. In a fluttering breath the blood drained from his face, and left it livid, leaden and blue. His widened eyes were fixed in horror.

"What's 'at?" Broken words brushed

(Continued on Page 9.)

# Jungle Treasure

## By Wilder Anthony

### The Opening of the Story

ORCHID hunter, explorer, adventurer—hardened to the dangerous life of Borneo and immune even to the dread of the fierce, native Dyaks——

**HUGH VARDEN** was pressing back, alone, thru the interior jungles, on his way to the coast. Forced to kill a Dyak from self-defense, he hid for a moment in behind a huge, gnarled root, and what was his astonishment to see a white woman appear thru the thicket! She startled him further by speaking English and remarking that she had been "expecting him." Without a trace of coquetry she told him her name,

**RUTH NASH,** and explained that she lived near with her father, who caught and trained animals for menageries. She seemed, however, to be troubled over the influence of another man,

**VICTOR MOREAU,** who lived with them and kept them from leaving the country. She appealed to Varden for help which he gladly granted. She asked him to return with her and to pretend he had killed the Dyak in her defense in order to insure his welcome. Just as they approached her home, an immense ape attacked and overpowered Varden.

He recovered consciousness at Ruth's home, where she had him carried, and she, herself, bathed and dressed his wounds, in spite of the hostile attitude of her father,

**GILBERT NASH.** Ruth explained to Varden that the gorilla was her pet, Rajah, whom she kept for protection. Hugh was surprised to find that Ruth was married to the man she had called her enemy, and the latter evinced an insincere friendliness toward his guest. In order to prolong his stay, Varden claimed to have knowledge of a hidden treasure which Moreau was eager to find.

When he was alone in his room Varden received a strange message written in English.

### CHAPTER V.
### THE QUEST BEGINS.

"BE CAREFUL," he read. "You are watched, and walls sometimes have ears. Speak of this to no one, but visit the Ancient One tomorrow in company with the Jungle Rose. Fail not if you would win that which you seek. Burn this."

Putting the spear away in a corner of the room, Varden threw some fresh wood upon the fire, for the jungle nights are damp and chilly, and sat down to fill his pipe. As he smoked and stared into the dancing flames with unseeing eyes, he tried to piece together the events of the evening. Mystery was piling upon mystery so rapidly that his mind was in a whirl. Who had caused the spear to be thrown, and why? Was it Moreau, or was it Nash, or was it Ruth? No one else in that village of unschooled Dyaks could—so far as he knew at least—even speak English, much less write it. But of the three people who could do so he could pick none from whom the message he held in his hand seemed a logical thing. Was the message a very clever attempt to get him to go somewhere where he might be caught off his guard, or was it, as its words implied, in truth a warning from some friend?

For a long time Varden smoked and pondered without coming to any satisfactory conclusion. At last he threw the leaf into the fire, watched it turn into ashes, and went to look thru his rifled knapsack. Nothing had been taken from it. His orchids and the few personal belongings which the bag contained were intact. From this he judged that the would-be thief had been searching for some particular thing. For what? The American shook his head hopelessly as he knocked the dottle from his pipe. When he had bolted his door and made sure that the room was as secure as he could make it against intrusion, he went to bed. He was tired, and in spite of his mental excitement, he soon fell asleep.

IT WAS soon after sunrise when Varden wakened and at first he found himself so stiff and sore that he could hardly rise. Once up and on his feet, however, he found that he felt much better. There was a large earthen jar of cold water, a bar of soap, and a rough towel in his room, and in spite of his injured arm he managed to thoroly enjoy a refreshing bath. By the time he unlocked his door and stepped out into the hall he felt practically normal, and he was as hungry as a wolf.

Ruth was alone in the living-room, setting the table, and from the little kitchen beyond there came an agreeable smell of cooking food.

"Good morning," he cried. "I'm glad I'm in time for breakfast. I don't think I ever felt so hungry before in my life.

The girl turned to smile at him.

"That's a good sign," she said. "Your wound must be mending fast. I'll have something hot on the table in a jiffy, and after you've eaten we'll dress your shoulder."

"How about the others?" he asked, noting that the table was set only for one.

"Up and gone long ago," she answered. "Moreau has at least one virtue: He's always out early, and this morning he had a special incentive—getting ready for the treasure hunt, you know. Dad has gone with him. I breakfasted with them."

Varden sat down and fell to on the fruit, fried fish, cornbread and coffee that she brought to him. The food was all served in quaint bowls and platters of Dyak manufacture, and it was the best meal that the visitor had tasted in more than a year. When he had eaten until he was ashamed of himself, he pushed back his chair and felt for his pipe.

"You say they're getting ready for the search," he remarked. "Do we start soon?"

"This morning, if possible," Ruth answered. "They'll be back presently and we must be ready. Your story of the map has caused something of a sensation"—her eyes twinkled roguishly—"and they are very eager to get away, but that isn't all. It's the Dyaks, partly. Many of them are very angry because of the warrior you killed and they have objected to your staying here. Moreau thinks it best to get to the caves before they have time to gather in force enough to prevent our going. We haven't any time to lose, so while we're talking I'd better put a fresh dressing on your wound."

She went into the kitchen and returned with a bowl of hot water and a soft cloth, and began her task with a deftness which showed that she had performed similar services more than once before. Varden sat still while she bathed and rebandaged his wound, dressing it with an aromatic salve which was very soothing. He was thinking over what had happened in his room on the previous night and wondering how much of it he had better mention. He felt sure that Ruth could clear up several things which puzzled him, altho he was equally sure that she knew nothing of what had taken place and he did not wish to worry her needlessly.

"There," the girl declared, giving the clean bandage a final pat, "that's better. I'm not a doctor, but I've had a little experience, and I don't think you will have any more trouble with this injury. It's healing beautifully. Don't forget our plan, however; you mustn't recover too rapidly, you know. Moreau believes that you are crippled, and he is not paying much attention to you for that reason. The longer we can keep him in his present frame of mind the better."

"I'll do my best," he assured her, "altho I must confess that I hate being disabled. But tell me this, please. Who is the Ancient One?"

"The Ancient One!" she repeated in surprise, with a quick upward look. "Why, Maka, of course. It is his native name. He is a very old man, you know. But, why? How did you know? We seldom speak of him by that name among ourselves."

AFTER an instant's hesitation, Varden told her of the message he had received, omitting nothing of the night's events except the fact that somebody had entered and searched his room, which he did more to save her pain than for any other reason, for he was sure in his own mind that her father had been the culprit. She listened breathlessly, her eyes shining like twin stars; but her face was very thoughtful when he finished.

"It must have been Maka," she said, at length. "No one else could have sent it. But I never knew before that Maka could write. It is like him, however, to keep things to himself that way. He told me once that he studied at one of the English mission schools when he was young and he speaks fairly good English. Yes, it must have been Maka. But how strange that he should communicate with you that way. How did he even know that you were here?"

"Natives told him, likely," Varden guessed.

"Perhaps," she admitted, "it's possible; but they didn't tell him that you were my friend or that you would come out of the jungle as you have to help us. He told me to expect you weeks ago, remember. It's all beyond me. Maka's knowledge is almost uncanny at times. But he wants to see you, evidently, and we must not disappoint him. I will take you to his cave this afternoon. Fortunately our first camp will be within a short walk of it and I had already made up my mind to visit him before we began our search. I told Dad as much this morning. It's very odd, Hugh. He seemed to know that I would bring you to him. I am the Jungle Rose referred to in his note—it is my native name."

"That's one mystery solved then," said Varden, in a tone of relief. "I'm glad, for it was worrying me a little. But tell me, Ruth. Surely you don't mean to go into the caves with us?"

"Of course I do. Why not? I shall be perfectly safe, and if anything should happen I prefer to be on hand. Besides, Rajah would not go without me, and Rajah is a host in himself where the Dyaks are concerned. They are terribly afraid of him. Of course, we do not expect any trouble. The country we are going into is taboo, or sacred, ground, and the natives are not likely to attack us there, but we can't be too careful."

"So the ape will go, too, eh?" he commented. "It will be quite a procession. I hope the beast doesn't tackle me again."

"He won't. That affair of yesterday was a pure accident. Rajah never attacks anybody without orders and when he sees you with me he will accept you as one of us. He has learned his lesson; just wait and I'll show you."

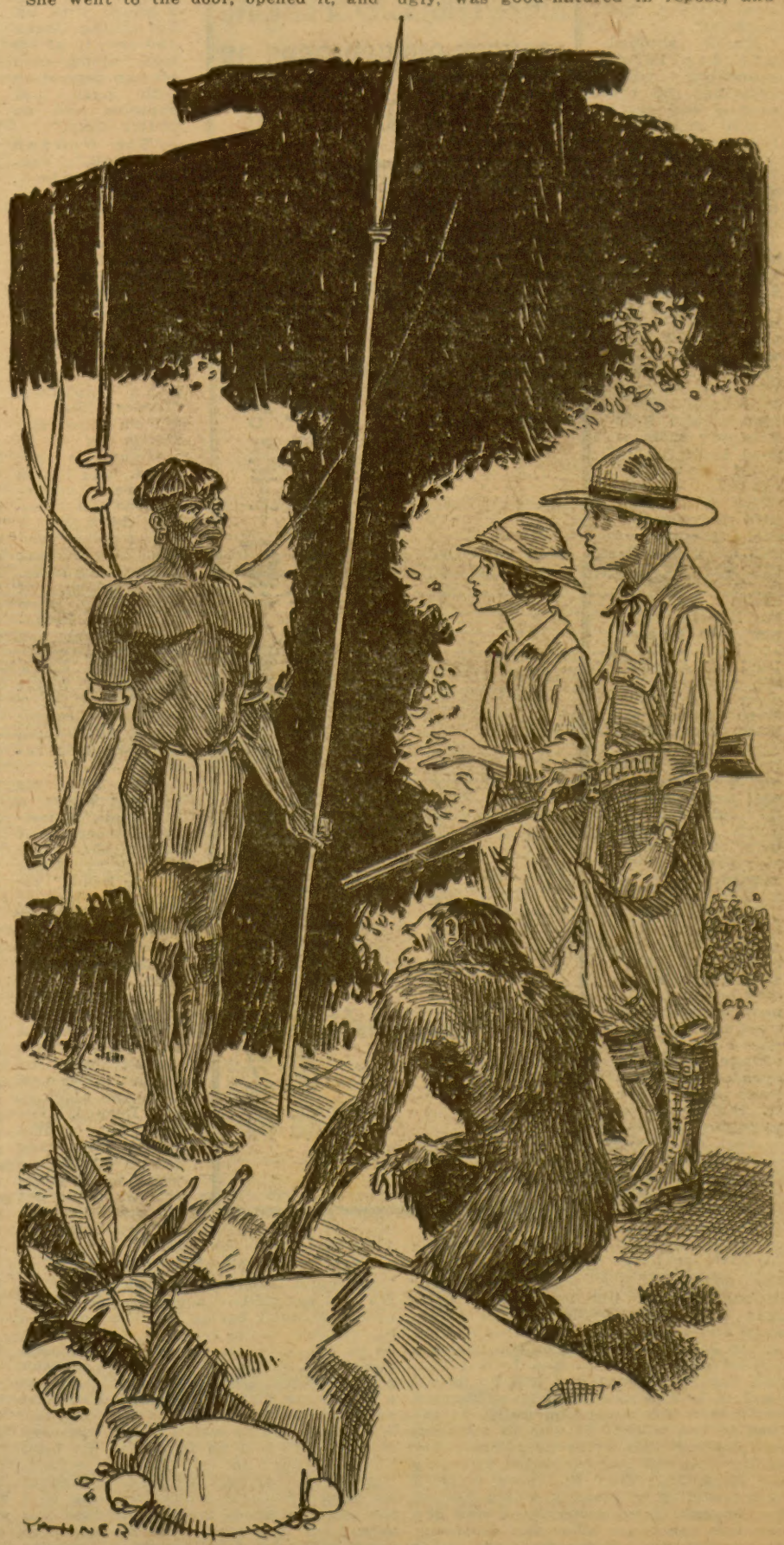
She went to the door, opened it, and uttered a peculiar kind of whistle. Almost immediately there was a pad of naked feet on the veranda and the shaggy figure of the big anthropoid appeared. When he saw his mistress he began to jabber excitedly, just as tho he were talking; then he became still and looked at her expectantly.

"Come here, Rajah," the girl ordered, stepping backward into the house. "Come here, sir!"

The big ape came as obediently as a well-trained dog. Arms hanging loosely at his sides, huge head swaying on its short neck, he shuffled inside, following Ruth, who retreated before him until she stood very close to Varden. Rajah came to a halt a yard away and eyed them both inquisitively.

Varden returned the look curiously and, it must be confessed, somewhat fearfully. Never before had he seen such a monster of the ape species, for the baboons which were so plentiful in many parts of the jungle were mere monkeys in comparison. Rajah, however, as Ruth had partly explained, was not a native of Borneo at all, but a huge buil from the African jungles.

In stature the ape was about the height of a good-sized man, but he was much heavier and more massively built than any man Varden had ever seen. He must have weighed well over two hundred and fifty pounds. His chest and shoulders were enormous, and his whole body, except his face and the palms of his hands and feet, was covered with shaggy brownish-black hair. Unlike his cousins, the baboons, his face, tho ugly, was good-natured in repose, and




**"What Would You Here, Jungle Rose?" He Demanded, Giving Ruth the Title by Which She Was Known to All the Natives.**

his small twinkling eyes were full of a mischievous gleam as they watched the two people in front of him.

Putting one slender arm across Varden's shoulders, Ruth spoke to the ape sharply. "Come here, Rajah," she commanded, come and make friends with my friend. "Give him some fruit from the table, Hugh," she added, in a lower tone. "He'll understand that better than talk."

Varden picked up an orange and held it out.

FOR a moment Rajah regarded him intently, not seeming to see the fruit at all and growling softly deep in his throat; then he shot out a huge paw and seized the gift, which he instantly tore to pieces with his strong fangs. Growing bolder suddenly, he reached out and took hold of Varden's arm—his well arm fortunately—and fingered the fabric of his shirt-sleeve curiously for an instant, growling softly all the while. At last he backed away and began to jabber at Ruth.

The girl smiled and motioned toward the open door. "Go now, Rajah," she ordred sharply. "Go outside!"

Rajah shuffled off docilely, munching what remained of the orange and casting quick glances over his shoulder, for all the world like a small boy who had been scolded by his teacher.

Ruth was smiling when she came back after shutting the door.

"He knows you now, Hugh," she said, "and he won't forget. After all, he is just like an intelligent dog—he knows his friends and he'll fight for them if need be."

"Of course," agreed Varden, altho a clammy chill ran over him as he thought of this frail, beautiful girl at the mercy of such a beast. To save his life he could not help looking at her with a kind of awe as she proceeded to clear off the table. Ruth seemed totally unconscious of this, however. To her, the giant ape was merly a pet; something to be regarded in much the same way as an ordinary person would regard a dog or a cat.

They talked then for a while as the sun rose higher and higher and great shadows began to appear between the trees and the various huts of the village. Their eyes often turned from each other to the windows, watching for the arrival of Victor Moreau and her father. She told him that all but three years of her life had been spent in England. She had never known either father or mother until she had come to live with the former in response to his message a little over two years before. Soon afterward there had been some trouble, her father had foolishly signed his name to certain papers, a man had been killed, and, tho her father had had no actual hand in this, Moreau had manufactured evidence which made him guilty in the eyes of the world. It was to suppress and destroy this evidence against her parent that she had consented to marry the Eurasian. They had been married by a traveling missionary, whom Moreau had brought from somewhere, and she had left the room after the ceremony with her father. Never since that hour had she been a wife in anything more than name to the scoundrel who had forced her to do his will.

They were interrupted finally by Moreau and Nash, who came up the hill from the direction of the village.

"You're looking better, Varden," the Eurasian declared. "I'm glad to see it. It's not very far to the caves, but it's rough going and you'll need your strength. We're all ready to start whenever you are."

"Good," replied Varden. "I'm feeling pretty fit. "All but my arm," he added hastily, at a warning signal from Ruth.

"We'll go direct to the White Caves," Moreau went on. "The ones I mentioned last night, you know. They're the most likely, I think, and since caves were spoken of by your native we'd better try 'em first. They're taboo ground—very sacred and all that rot. The Dyaks bury their dead in 'em, and few but the priests and witch-doctors ever go there. It's a good, safe place for us to camp until this fuss over your killing dies down. None of our villagers would go near the Frozen Waterfall for all the wealth in Borneo. Of course, we'll have a guard with us. I'm taking Chaka and twenty of his men along—men we can depend on—to pack our supplies and do sentry duty."

"The Frozen Waterfall," Varden repeated, struck by the incongruity of the term in a region where the temperature never went below freezing. "What is that?"

"Lot of creamy froth hanging over a cliff in front of the main cave," the Eurasian explained. "Looks like ice when the sun shines on it, so we gave it that name. The Dyaks are very superstitious about it—they think there's a bad spirit confined there that will eat 'em alive. All rubbish, of course"—he gave one of his horse-laughs—"but you know these Dyaks. Strange, however, your man didn't mention it, if we're on the right track. It's known all thru this region."

"He told me nothing about a waterfall," admitted Varden, "but I remember some remark about the 'White Dead'." He said this last at a venture, acting upon a hint received from Ruth a little while before.

"By George, we've got it then!" Moreau burst out exultantly. "That name can't be given to more than one place in all Borneo. It's the big grotto where they bury their chiefs—you'll see it yourself when we get there, Varden. We've been all thru the place. Eh, Dad?"

Nash nodded silently. Since entering the room he had not opened his mouth. He just sat still in a corner, his shiftly eyes constantly boring into the American as tho they would read his soul. Today, as on the previous night, Varden found the man a puzzle. Somehow, he couldn't get the idea out of his head that he was a lot deeper than he looked and at least as much to be feared as was Moreau. He determined to watch them both very closely. He had no fear that his bluff about having a mental map of the location of the treasure would be called at all soon. Ruth had informed him that the caves were of tremendous size and very hard to explore, and he meant to cause delay by feigning great difficulty in finding his landmarks; making his methods of procedure fit themselves to circumstances as the search progressed.

RUTH disappeared to change into her man's attire, and Varden made use of the opportunity to stow his orchids away in a safe place and to get his rifle and knapsack.

They left the house presently and descended to the village, where they found a score of armed warriors waiting for them. Varden examined these men curiously as he drew near, for it was the first chance he had to do so. He found them similar to the ordinary bush Dyak in dress and general characteristics, but they were more intelligent looking. Some of them, in fact, were exceedingly fine specimens of primitive manhood. One in particular—the young chief, Chaka—was a splendidly proportioned fellow, nearly six feet tall and beautifully built, but he possessed the most ferocious countenance that Varden had ever seen on a human being. None of the warriors paid any attention to the visitor beyond eying him a little curiously when he first appeared. Somehow, it seemed to the American that they were cowed by Moreau's presence.

With the Dyaks in the lead, carrying a quantity of food and camp equipment—for the party expected to remain in the mountains for a number of days—they set out toward the upper end of the valley. As they left the village behind them and passed the animal pens, Varden saw that only three of the cages were occupied. One contained a pair of jungle leopards, or tigers, as the natives call them, while the others were filled with small monkeys. From the number of cages, however, it was evident that Gilbert Nash had at one time done a thriving business, for there must have been accommodations for more than a hundred animals.

They passed beyond the village and began to climb the side of a low mountain which blocked the head of the valley. Their surroundings became more weird and mysterious with each yard they traveled. The rugged peaks which Varden had noticed on his first arrival at the valley were now very close to them, and they seemed to crowd in toward them from both sides. The trees and lianas became more scattered, and the trail wound between many colored rocks which were sprinkled over the hillsides on either hand. The place was dead and unwholesome looking. It had that unnatural appearance found only amid scenes of great desolation, which was probably the reason why the superstitious Dyaks accredited it with being the home of devils.

With each step forward the ascent became steeper and more difficult. The porters puffed and sweated under their burdens, and the whole party was forced to halt at frequent intervals to breathe. That is, all but Rajah. The big ape was in his element, moving as easily over the rough ground as a man might walk on a paved street. It was during one of their frequent halts that Ruth, who had been walking between her father and Moreau, dropped back to Varden's side.

"What do you think of it, so far?" she asked, smiling.

"It's about the most peculiar bit of scenery I ever passed thru," he answered. "Far more strange and awe-inspiring than the jungle below."

"If you think that now, just wait until we reach the caves and the pass that leads to them," she rejoined. "But you're right; it is awe-inspiring! Well as I know this trail, I never come here without having that creepy sensation that some one is watching me. It almost seems as if the trees and rocks had eyes. No wonder that Maka has chosen it for his home; it's just the right setting for one who is supposed to deal in magic."

"Maka lives near here, then?"

"Yes; only a few miles farther on. We'll have plenty of time to go there and return before dark. We don't travel much farther today, for it would be impossible to reach the caves before nightfall, even if we hurried. My, isn't this a creepy place?"

Varden nodded. He could easily understand the impression such surroundings must have on the native mind. The deep gorge thru which they were at that moment passing seemed actually to resent the appearance of human beings. It was as if the place possessed a personality, as if it had buried itself in a long dead past, and the travelers were filled with the same kind of awe which strikes the stranger who wanders for the first time into the depths of some gloomy heathen temple. The silence was so complete it could be felt. No bird or monkey chattered here; Varden could easily hear the ticking of the watch on his wrist, and the labored breathing of the Dyak porters was distinctly audible.

The depth of the gorge increased as they advanced. They were in a narrow runway not more than two yards wide, with rock walls which shut off all view. The ground was covered with small mossy stones, between and over which grew a profusion of stunted ferns and strange-looking plants. Suddenly the path widened and they stepped into a kind of amphitheater or bowl between the hills. Here on the bank of a little stream which sprang from beneath the cliff Moreau called a halt.

"We'll camp here until daylight tomorrow," he announced. "The porters are tired, and it's as good a place as we shall find—plenty of water and all that. You all can do as you please for the rest of today. As for me, I'm going on ahead with Chaka to spy out the road a little."

## CHAPTER VI.

### MAKA.

HALF an hour later, after they had partaken of a hurried lunch, Ruth and Varden started up a narrow side path, which, she said, led to the solitary home of the old witch-doctor. Varden was conscious of a feeling of a strange eagerness as they left the camp behind them, a feeling which had been present in his mind ever since he had discovered that Maka was the author of the message he had received, and a feeling which Ruth seemed to share. Until they were well out of sight of the camp they said nothing, but with Rajah swinging along at one side they picked their way over the rough ground in silence.

"You may think it strange," said Ruth, when they finally paused for breath, "that I am so eager; but I have a feeling that Maka is going to tell us something very important and strange. He has shown himself to be my friend in so many ways. Somehow, he has always acted as tho he had an especial fondness for me. For a Dyak, he is very wise. It sounds foolish, perhaps, but I can't help feeling that Maka knows things. He predicted your coming, Hugh, and he has predicted other things besides which have always come to pass. He evidently wants to see you for some very good reason. He—he is uncanny at times; he often hints at things that I cannot understand."

"Lots of times these native witch-doctors do that," Varden agreed. "They are a strange breed: the majority of them are fakers, I think, but there are undoubtedly a few who possess strange powers. I have seen them do things at times for which I have never been able to account. It is no wonder that their people fear them; I would fear them myself if I were a Dyak."

"Maka is really wonderful," the girl went on. "He is very, very old. The Dyaks say that he has lived here always; but of course that is absurd. Still, he is very ancient, and at times he seems to see things that are invisible to ordinary eyes. Moreau is frankly afraid of him—he is the only person, by the way, that I know of of whom Moreau is afraid—and Maka hates Moreau. He also seems to dislike Dad."

Varden paused to light his pipe and smiled to himself. In spite of their peculiar situation and the dangers which, according to Ruth, at least, threatened them on every hand, he was conscious of a great happiness. Nothing could dampen his feeling of thanksgiving toward the fate which had thrown Ruth and him together. Not even the knowledge that she was another man's wife could keep him from building air castles, altho by neither word nor look did he permit his thoughts to become known to her. He had a feeling that some day everything was destined to end as he would wish and in the meantime he was content to wait. Such a girl was worth waiting for, he told himself. Already he felt a better man just for having known her, and he intended to keep his promise to serve her in so far as he was able and let the future take care of itself.

He was not impatient. He was in a way rather enjoying the delay. It gave him an opportunity for those dreams of delightful anticipation which hardly ever find their equal in realization. To him this girl had become the most dazzlingly wonderful creature that ever walked the earth. In the depths of that gloomy jungle, clad in man's attire, she stood out like a single star in a dark sky; he almost hugged himself in his delight when he pictured her in civilization amid the surroundings to which she was born. Nor were these dazzling fancies the offspring of selfishness. Varden wanted to serve her, to work for her, to fight for her; he wanted to spend the rest of his life making her happy, and he felt that if he were only permitted to do this he could ask for no greater reward.

He was brought back to a realization of his surroundings by the sudden apparition directly in their path of a tall, fierce-looking Dyak, armed with a long spear, who regarded them sternly.

"What would you here, Jungle Rose?" he demanded, giving Ruth the title by which she was known to all the natives.

"I would see Maka," the girl answered. "Tell him that I bring the white tuan of whom we have spoken."

"What need to tell the Ancient One that which he already knows?" the guard retorted, as he stepped to one side. "Pass, Jungle Rose, and you, tuan. Maka waits you in the Cave of Wisdom."

**Varden was to be plunged into the atmosphere of the occult. In a weird, dark cave, festooned with fantastic shadows where even the last vagrant sunbeams looked eerie, Hugh was to learn the secret that marked an epoch of his whole future life. In the next Ledger, enter strange grotto with Hugh Varden and meet Maka, the Ancient One.**

* * *

## Couldn't Afford It Now.

"WHAT did Columbus prove by standing an egg on end?"

"That eggs in his day were cheap enough to be handled carelessly."


# Special Notice

**Regarding the story appearing, in English, on Page 3 of the next issue of the Ledger:**

**TO ALL THE AMERICAN-BORN AND ENGLISH-SPEAKING CHINESE SUBSCRIBERS OF THE LEDGER RESIDING IN**

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**Nashville, Tenn.**
**Dallas, Tex.**
**Emery, Ill.**
**Cleveland, Ohio, and**
**Lonoke, Ark.**

已。臥地裝瘋。又于十一號十二號兩日因有女學開會之藉其猥。雜傾此等軍士眞不諳。軍醫森立如備非常。魯民何不幸至此。甚至登堂欲

# The Dark Mirror

(Continued From Page 6)

his stiff lips. "What's 'at?" He lifted a shaking arm and singled out Priscilla. His voice became a scream: "Name of Gawd! somebody tell me—what's 'at there?"

The Nut dropped a soothing hand upon his shoulder.

"Why, Red—it's Nora!"

"Nora?" the gunman chattered. "I know it's Nora! But what's it doin' here?"

"But, Red!"—in alarm English Addie ranged up on his other side and laid hold of his arm—"why shouldn't Nora be here?"

"Why?" He glared madly at the woman. "Why, 'cause she's dead."

"But, Red——"

"Dead, I tell you! I guess I oughta know. Didn't I croak her meself, up there in the woods, yest'day aft'noon!" He seemed to realize what he had said and tried to cover it with hysterical protest. "No; that's a lie! Who said I croaked her? I never, she done it herself, it was all a accident! I tell you I didn't have nothin' to do with it—her foot slipped and she went over the edge before I could catch her, and I seen her drown! I couldn't help her, I don't know how to swim, I'd 've pulled her out if I had! It wasn't my fault—I swear to Gawd it was all a accident!"

"But, Red—you're off your nut!" Addie reasoned. "Nora couldn't be dead and here at the same time——"

"She is dead! Didn't I see her drown meself? Gawd! I ain't seen nothin' since but her face when she went under, I ain't heard nothin' but her voice beggin' me not to. . . ."

HE STAMMERED into incoherence, his chin sank upon his breast, he glared at Priscilla with the look of a lunatic. Abruptly he roused, wild of eye, features working insanely, and threw off the hands of Addie and the Nut.

"Lemme loose!" he screamed. "Lemme loose! I croaked her once, but if once ain't enough, I'll croak her again and make it sure, the——"

Epithets unspeakably vile fell like toads from his slavering mouth. He tugged at a pocket of his trousers—and suddenly an automatic pistol was wavering in his hand. With a choking cry, Priscilla cowered, throwing both hands out to shield her face. The Nut and Addie fell upon Carnehan bodily. For a moment it seemed that they might be able to hold him. But he fought with the strength of a maniac. The hold of the Englishwoman was broken first, she was thrown off, shrieking for help. The Nut clung desperately to Carnehan's pistol hand, striving to wrest the weapon from him. Then others closed in, Carnehan became the core of a swaying, writhing tangle of bodies.

It was, Priscilla thought, like looking thru a peephole into hell. They fought like wild beasts in a pit, like beasts they growled, yelped, snarled, snapped, howled, roared. A haze of dust, beaten up from the unswept floor by scuffling, shifting, stamping feet, hung in the gaslight.

The pistol exploded with a detonation ear-splitting in that confined space.

Priscilla, witless with fright, felt herself seized and urged toward the door.

"Beat it, child—get out of this as quick's you can! I seen from the very first you wasn't Nora!"

She recognized the accent of English Addie.

In one lithe bound, a crouching shape of malice with a pale face of evil and blazing eyes planted itself before them and blocked the way. "Keep away from that door!" Inez screeched. "She shan't get away, she shan't! I'll rip her eyes out first!"

She darted clawing hands at Priscilla's face. The bulk of the Englishwoman came between them. In panic Priscilla pawed frantically at the door, swung it wide, stumbled out, blundered blindly into the wall where the hallway turned, cannoned off, and somehow found herself before a second door.

An aged Chinaman was guarding it. Dully she remembered having seen him before and wondered would he seek to hinder her. But he seemed unaware of her. He was eying impassively the door, which, she discovered, was quivering under a rain of blows on the other side.

Grasping instinctively at the truth, she thrust the guardian unceremoniously aside and began to fumble with the bolts.

Without protest, the Chinaman turned and shuffled off.

The storm blows continued. The bolts were reluctant to her shaking, uninstructed fingers. At length, however, the last slid back, she lifted the stout iron latch, the door slammed open.

Three uniformed policemen, armed with pistols and nightsticks, charged in. Seeing the girl, one seized and threw her roughly back against the wall. She gave a cry of pain. A voice she knew protested sharply:

"Let that lady go, officer. She is my wife."

Priscilla turned. Mario was offering her the haven of his arms. She went into them sobbing his name aloud. Other police officers passed them, running.

As readily as tho she had been a child, Mario gathered her up and strode down the stairs. Arms round his neck, she clung closely to him. His breath was on her cheek, she was aware of his strength and gentleness. Nestling against his bosom, she was sensible of the unhurried, powerful pulsations of his heart.

### CHAPTER XLV.
### RESCUED.

THE reminiscent feeling was now more than ever strong, more insistent. The old saw failed; for once history was retelling a familiar chapter. All that she was apprehending was mere repetition—all this she had known before!

Precisely as now had Mario carried her down the stairs of the burning tenement. The same loud babbling had saluted their escape, the same surging mob disputed their passage. Once more Mario lifted her into a waiting motor-car, shut the door and, as the driver jockeyed a way thru the crowd, gathered her tenderly into his arms.

Or was it Leonora to whom these things had one time happened and now were happening again?

Was this, too, a dream?

Reality was something as slippery and evasive as a greased tumbler, the effort to recapture and hold fast to it too fatiguing; if this were but a dream, in those arms, to dream was sweet.

Without one regret she resigned herself to the dominion of the dream; and ability to discriminate between illusion and actuality lapsed. So with sense of personality; there was confusion, but it was of no consequence; whether Leonora or Priscilla, she was safe with her beloved, and at rest.

In such security instinct for self-preservation lost purpose and languished; the necessity for self-assertion was no more, which had sustained her powers against the drag upon them of narcotic poisoning added to sheer physical exhaustion; consciousness faded into a phase of half-waking lethargy, in which she was by turns aware and unaware; and the fiction of a dream was maintained by impressions of changing scenes unrelated save thru the constant progress of the car.

Streets, mean and grim, dissolved as by magic into a jeweled perspective of Fifth avenue, bare and still. Darkness closed down and lifted like a curtain to disclose vistas of black water veined with rippling lights. These in turn were blotted out. . . . Veils of shadow thinned, revealing the purple glimmer of an open starlight night and the white lance of the headlights shearing a lane thru dim and silent fields. . . . Hours later (or perhaps years—or minutes) the car was roaring upgrade on a forest road, like a tunnel roofed and walled with leaves, whose silhouettes in the swinging headlight glare had the look of patterns cut from cardboard and painted an earthly green. . . . Then in the ghostly early dawn their way wound thru wilderness hills that reared desolate heads to a wan, cold sky. . . . And the world was aflame with the red blaze of sunrise when she was lifted up, borne across a veranda, thru a living-room to a bedchamber, and there put down upon a bed.

Mario, standing over her, had a face worn and gray with weariness. Near by a maid waited, a comely creature of middle age whose countenance of kindly cast was blurred with the stupidity of slumbers untimely broken.

The man instructed this one in a flat, dull voice:

"You will undress madame, please, and put her to bed. She will sleep late, I think; she has had a terrible adventure and is quite worn out; but should she awaken before I do, tell Hamanaka to call me instantly."

He knelt and pressed his lips to Priscilla's, to her forehead, her leaden eyelids, her languid hands.

"Dear heart of mine," he murmured . . . "dear wife . . ."

He rose. Like one walking in sleep he left the room.

### CHAPTER XLVI.
### THE DAY OF RECKONING.

ON ENTERING the living-room she heard a clock strike. Immediately she paused, counting.

Eight chimes died singing in the scented evening hush; but she did not stir, her pose remained that of one arrested sharply in some act of charming stealth, so delicately poised in apprehensiveness she seemed scarcely to touch the floor. The sensitive slender fingers of one hand brushed with their tips the polished top of a small mahogany console table. Half closed, the other rested upon a froth of lace covering a bosom whose agitation, together with the quick, curious glances of dark eyes, alone belied the pale composure of her countenance.

The room was quiet, dim with shadows, but for herself untenanted.

Neither could she see anybody on the veranda that was visible thru a wide doorway and low, broad windows.

A slight sound drew her attention the other way. She discovered a dining-room beyond the living-room. Soft-footed, a Japanese boy in white linen appeared, carrying two candelabra of three branches each, and vanished after placing them upon the round dining table, where their rich light fell softly on lustrous napery, burnished silver, an iridescent bowl of cutglass filled with burning roses.

She remarked that there were places set for two.

Her regard reverted to the living-room. She thought it delightful in every detail of its unpretentious luxury. Riches alone could never have created it. The wood fire ready laid in the fieldstone fireplace would presently be grateful; already there was a hint of chill in the aromatic, rare air of the hills.

She moved aimlessly to the middle of the room and paused again. A long breath sighed on her lips. As she turned uneasily toward the veranda a duplication of the gesture made her aware of a mirror on the wall opposite. She inspected herself gravely.

Vitality of youth had reacted normally during her long sleep. She carried never a sign of those ordeals which she had undergone in the last forty-eight hours. The simple frock which the maid had fetched her unbidden fitted and became her to admiration. Never, indeed, had she looked more lovely. This was not her thought, tho her little nod betokened satisfaction. Nevertheless her eyes betrayed still a mind troubled and oppressed.

She had waked up without a shadow of doubt upon her understanding, she recalled without a break every link in the chain of events which had brought her to this place, she was acutely conscious of her indescribable position in this household, profoundly disturbed. But she had said nothing to the maid whom she had found watching by her bedside;

(Continued on Page 19.)

# Never Sleep

## With a film-coat on your teeth

*All statements approved by authorities*

Millions of people on retiring now combat the film on teeth. They fight it day by day. And those glistening teeth seen everywhere now form one of the results.

You owe yourself a trial of this new teeth-cleaning method. Dentists everywhere advise it. The results it brings are all-important, and they do not come without it.

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Your teeth are coated with a viscous film. Feel it with your tongue. It clings to teeth, enters crevices and stays. And dentists now trace most tooth troubles to it.

The ordinary tooth paste does not end film. So, despite all brushing, much film remains, to cause stain, tartar, germ troubles and decay.

It is the film-coat that discolors, not the teeth. Film is the basis of tartar. It holds food substance which ferments and forms acid. It holds the acid in contact with the teeth to cause decay.

Millions of germs breed in it. They, with tartar, are the chief cause of pyorrhea.

### Ways to combat it

Dental science, after years of research, has found effective ways to fight film. Able authorities have proved their efficiency. Together they bring, in modern opinion, a new era in teeth cleaning.

These five methods are combined in a dentifrice called Pepsodent — a tooth paste which complies with all the new requirements. And a ten-day tube is now sent free to everyone who asks.

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You will see and feel results from Pepsodent which brushing never brought you heretofore. A week's use, we think, will amaze you.

One ingredient is pepsin. One multiplies the starch digestant in the saliva, to digest all starch deposits that cling. One multiplies the alkalinity of the saliva to neutralize mouth acids.

Two factors directly attack the film. One of them keeps the teeth so highly polished that film cannot easily cling.

Watch these effects. Send the coupon for a ten-Day Tube. Note how clean the teeth feel after using. Mark the absence of the viscous film. Note how teeth whiten as the film-coat disappears.

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*The New-Day Dentifrice*

**A scientific film combatant combined with two other modern requisites. Now advised by leading dentists everywhere and supplied by all druggists in large tubes.**

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Only one tube to a family

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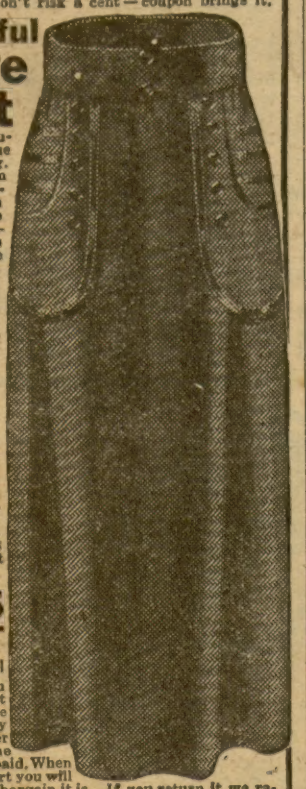
**Beautiful Serge Skirt**



The style is superb—the value simply amazing. Tailored from excellent specially woven serge. Note the handsome up-to-the-minute lines and comfortable 56-inch sweep which assures perfect ease in walking. Front enlivened with novelty pockets designed with overlaid panels trimmed with buttons and silk braid. Shirred across back at waistline under wide detachable belt. Rows of silk braid over hips. Color, Navy blue. Order No. R816. Sizes, 24 to 32-inch waist. 33 to 42-inch front length.

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That's all you pay when skirt is delivered—the balance on easy terms, $1.00 per month until the price, $4.95, is paid. When you see the skirt you will realize what a bargain it is. If you return it we refund your money. Not a cent of risk to you.

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Waist.....Skirt length.....

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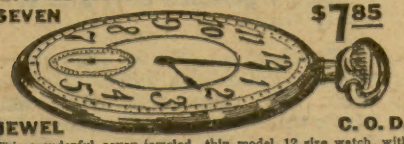

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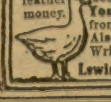

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# "Tetched"

(Concluded From Page 4.)

This letter was different, not as to spelling, but as to content, and when Retty had deciphered it and thrust it back into the now effectual flames, she was somewhat bewildered. Could it be possible that a sober and conscientious man of 72, who had withstood the wiles of the Widder Snyder thirty-five years ago; had turned with scorn and upbraidings from a flirtatious German hired girl who had infested the farm kitchen once in the past; who had shaken off the seductive arm of Sister Bangs during the excitement of a revival meeting, and had coldly informed her that it wasn't religion which made women go round hugging other women's husbands—could it be that such a man had fallen victim to the charms of an unprincipled female? Retty could not or would not believe it! And yet, who or what was Calendine of whom this letter spoke in such glowing terms? And who was this go-between who wrote so poorly yet so convincingly?

"She's a beauty from hull to mainstay," gushed the writer. "What is the price of four steers compared to her! Lonzo Scroby, you are a fool if you let her git by you. Other men don't let such things git by 'em, you bet—men not anywhere as well off as you be nuther. As soon as the weather clears up a little if you'll take your old Dawl hoss and the buggy I'll drive over to Randolph with you to see her. Your wife needn't know a thing about it and if you don't like the looks of her why that'll be all there is to it. You won't be under no obligations to me nor to nobody else. But this here Calendine is a beauty an' no mistake."

The letter was unsigned. Retty watched it curl into nothingness as Lonzo had planned for it to do the day before. She was not much troubled. She had never been a jealous woman, and she did not intend to become one now so near the date of her golden wedding. She decided that some one was making a catspaw of Lonzo for purposes of his own, and she had faith enough in Lonzo to believe him able to withstand any plot involving "the price of four steers." Which goes to show that even a sensible old wife like Retty Scroby may sometimes trust too implicitly.

For the tempter had made fearful progress with Lonzo. He had gone to Randolph to see Calendine, he had seen Calendine, he was infatuated with Calendine from her front lamps to the tire strapped on in her rear. He had let himself be persuaded that her engine was infallible, her power inexhaustible, her speed and staying qualities unapproachable. The agent of the Calendine company had told him so, and Jed Lawson had corroborated all of the agent's statements. In due time the four steers (in company with two extra steers to make the purchase price come right) were on their way to the Chicago stockyards, and Lonzo Scroby was the possessor of a shiny, mysterious, fascinating machine, and a soul-seering, brain-withering secret.

"I'm tetched all right," he declared to Jed Lawson desperately, the day after the deal was closed. "I'm tetched, or I'd never have let you persuade me into this thing!"

"I persuade you!" moaned Jed with upturned eyes, "I persuade you! Well, Lonzo Scoby, if you talk like that I shall certainly think that your wife was right and that you are tetched. My goodness! I persuade—well, if that don't beat everything! You know well enough this here buyin' a car ain't goin' to advantage me none. In fact, just t'other way, for I shall have to leave my work an' go a-shoverin' all over the country—for nothin', I s'pose, tho goodness knows it's worth money."

"Well, if you feel that way about it you needn't worry! I'll take the instructions myself—I'll resk but what I can learn to shove 'er—an' you can stay an' tend to your work. I'll take Retty——" Jed immediately retracted.

"You know just as well as I do, Scroby, that your wife wouldn't go, an' if she did you'd probably break her neck and your own, too. It takes time to learn to be an all-round shover. You see I've had practice an' I'm willin' to go for your sake. We can take it easy and whenever we come to a flat piece of road why you can take the wheel an' I can learn you, an' before we strike the Pacific Ocean you'll be able to run the car almost as well as I can. Now don't go an' git cold feet after all our plannin', an' the season wearin' right along, too. If we're a-goin' to make the Pacific coast an' back agin afore snow flies we got to git a move on; we ain't got no time to set an' snivel an' wish we had never started the business. You've got the price of six good steers in that there Calendine an' it's up to you to git your money's worth out of the car this summer, or, anyway, part of it. W'y, my land! a man of your age may be dead or dippy before next summer. A man like you ain't got no time to spare."

"I told you I was too old to go into a thing like this!" whimpered the weakening Lonzo, "an' you stuck to it that I wasn't!"

"Well, you ain't, if you only brace up an' think you ain't. Don't get petrified! As I said afore, a short life an' a merry one is better'n a long life an' a happy one."

"It's the way I'm usin' Retty that cuts into me!"

"Oh, shoot Retty! I ain't frettin' about Retty!"

"Course you ain't! She ain't your wife!"

"I never fretted about my own wife, nuther."

"I bet you didn't! An' where is she now?"

IT CERTAINLY took a great deal of effort on Jed's part to keep old Scroby up to the scratch. And on two or three occasions he nearly lost out for good and all, as upon the day when the two crouched behind the little Scroby hothouse composing a farewell letter of instructions to Retty.

She wasn't to fret about the farm, for Bill Peters was going to see to everything there, and Rob Sayers was to look after the garden here in town. If nothing went amiss Scroby himself would be home in time to lift the tulip bulbs, and to harvest the blackberries. He was sorry to leave this way, and never would have done it if she had been willing to come along, but he just had to take the trip or he was liable to petrify, or go crazy in the head like Uncle Abner. There was money in the bank for her to draw on, and she was to get Rob Sayer's wife to come and stay nights with her. And she was to take it easy and go visiting whenever she felt like it, and have company; and, above everything else, she was not to worry about her husband, because nothing had even been known to go amiss with a Calendine machine. It was a regular one-hoss shay for completeness. It had been known to run right along, keeping the road for ten miles with the driver asleep at the wheel. But, of course, there wasn't going to be any such chances taken on this trip. Scroby assured his wife that he was taking along an experienced driver, "or shover, as they called the driver of an automobile," and they meant to "shove 'er" right straight thru to the Pacific Ocean and back again before bad weather set in. He would bring her some shells and things from the Pacific Ocean beach.

Both men thought it better not to disclose the identity of the driver.

"For some reason or other your woman never did have no confidence in me," complained Jed.

"I know she didn't," admitted Scroby, "and she had her reasons." Jed changed the subject and they proceeded with their epistolary task.

Occasionally life affords one hour of perfect, unadulterated bliss; an hour of Heaven where no care intrudes, neither fear for tomorrow, nor regret for yesterday. Such hours are rare—and short; oh, how short! Lonzo Scroby and Jed Lawson experienced such an hour. They had walked out to the Scroby farm where Bill Peters awaited to drive them cross country to Randolph and Calendine. From this point they made their start over a perfect road, the blue sky above, the west wind in their faces. It was then that they experienced the perfect hour.

"Wha'd I tell you!" triumphed Jed, and stepped on the gas until Calendine whooped it up to thirty-five miles. Scroby's peaked old nose and cheekbones were fiery red from the effects of excitement and the strong wind; his scant gray locks blew out from underneath his securely anchored hat; his pointed white chin-whisker parted in the middle and lay back against his cheeks; his blue eyes bulged.

"Wha'd I tell you?" repeated Jed, and turning to observe the effect of the flight on his companion, failed to see a spiked muzzle designed for some bovine baby bent on illicit nourishment. The spikes, intended for a sharp reminder to the maternal udder, entered the left front tire of Calendine and Scroby and Jed Lawson came abruptly to the end of the aforementioned perfect hour. There followed upbraidings on Scroby's part, and profanity on Jed's.

With the kindly aid of a passing motorist they managed the change of tire, but from that time forth Calendine giggled in her sleeve and, like all sirens, now that she had her victims in her power, showed her ugly side. She became femininely erratic and did things which, in Jed Lawson's short experience, he had never dreamed that an automatic could do. She showed symptoms of colic and the blind staggers, wholly out of place in one so young.

"It's because you don't know enough to run 'er!" scolded Scroby.

"Oh, shet up!" returned Jed. Scroby, sitting in the stalled machine, was not suffering half what he was as with trembling fingers he unscrewed parts of Calendine's anatomy and rescrewed them without in the least knowing what their functions might be. With more warmth than politeness he invited Scroby to "git down out o' that there an' come an' see if he could figger out what ailed the darned old garbage wagon!"

"Not much, I won't!" Lonzo retorted. "I paid for the garbage wagon, as you call it, with the understandin' that you knowed her from axle to linchpin! I've done my part; I've squandered six as good steers as ever munched hay to start this here expedition, now you do yours an' keep 'er goin'!"

Jed went on screwing and unscrewing and muttering frightfully wicked phrases into the bowels of the machine, his face smeared with grease and perspiration, his hair pointing many ways, his general appearance that of a man who had been blown the hundred miles intervening between him and Randolph instead of having made the trip by motor car.

Another autoist (they were everywhere) explained away Jed's perplexities, and Calendine consented to take the road once more.

IT WAS the first night's halt, however, which did for Lonzo Scroby. Jed had pictured these periods of repose with an almost poetical fancy. Sleeping in the open, under green boughs, beside purling waters, right out in God's world, where the air was sweet and pure! Soroby watched Jed converting the car into a couch, realizing as he did so that the couch was going to be too short, and that in order to accommodate one's self to its curves a person must needs have the flexible backbone of a tomcat. For years he and Retty had slept in a bed which heaved gently upward in the middle, allowing head and heels a downward inclination. Reposing for forty years on the same set of springs had so accustomed Lonzo's bones to that position that it was impossible for him to rest in any other. His thoughts dwelt constantly on that old story of the man who was sentenced to spend his life in a cell shaped like an egg, where he could neither sit, lie, nor stand. After an hour or so of this torture he began to think of his Uncle Abner, and fearsomely he made a gesture of winding wire. Then he dropped asleep for a few moments, only to awaken in a clammy horror. A dreadful noise was in his ears, a nightmarish weight upon his chest. He decided that he was dying, far, far from Retty, his beloved wife, his farm, his market garden, Doll, the horse—everything for which he cared! And Retty would not mourn for him—how could she mourn for a husband who had deliberately deserted her in her old age!

The dreadful, struggling noise persisted; the weight on his chest pinned him down.

"Good-by forever, Retty!" he yelled aloud, and breaking the spell at last, threw out a hand. It encountered a human foot up somewhere in the neighborhood of his ear—Jed Lawson's foot. Scroby grasped it tightly and flung it from him with all his might. The weight was gone from Scroby's chest, and with a winding-up snort and gulp, the horrid noise of Jed's snoring ceased at the same time. Scroby planted two broad old feet in the small of his companion's back and gave one mighty kick.

"Whoop!" ejaculated Jed as he struck the greensward.

"How many nights will we have to be on the road before we git to the Pacific Ocean?" demanded Scroby of Jed who was gathering himself together on the ground.

"About thirty," murmured Jed, scrambling back under the blankets. He was under the impression that he had fallen out of bed thru his own carelessness, and was therefore ashamed, but not angry. In two minutes he was making those same dreadful noises again with his nose and throat.

Scroby lay awake in the darkness, his thin old lips compressed, his gray chin-whisker pointing sharply upward, his eyes bulging with the strength of the resolve forming in his mind. Thirty nights like this? Never! He meant to start for his shattered home in the morning. He was going to deliver himself into the hands of his betrayed and abandoned wife to do with as she saw fit. She would, undoubtedly, send him to the crazy house and he hoped she would. He was crazy—he must be crazy,


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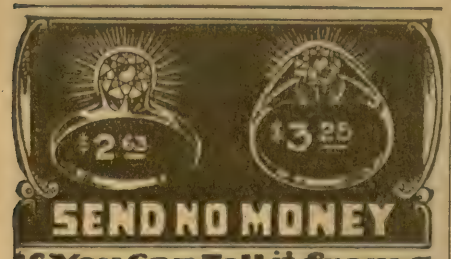


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or he would never have let Jed Lawson get him into such a scrape as this!

"Git your leg off my neck!" he yelled, and once more flung the wandering limb over upon its own side of the couch.

At the first streak of dawn he sat up and slapped Jed in the face to waken him.

"Git up," he called, "an' head this old hay-wagon east'ard; I'm a-goin' home!"

It took Jed some time to collect his faculties.

"I didn't sleep very well," he muttered, and yawned widely.

"Didn't, eh?" sneered Scroby, "I slept like a house afire!"

"No, I was too tired."

"You'll sleep better tonight, for you'll be in your own bed in the Center House—that's where you put up when you're home, ain't it—the Center House?"

"Wha'd'yeh mean?" demanded Jed.

"Jest what I say; we're a-goin' home! I've had enough of the Pacific Ocean with its flounderin' waves an' its roarin' noises—I've had enough of it, I say, an' I'm a-goin' to head for home this mornin', so git this junk strapped an' baled and back in its place as soon as you can."

"Oh, sugar, Scroby! You don't mean anything of the kind!" protested Jed.

"Yes, I do mean it! I'm goin' to see home an' Retty once more before I die—just once more before she sends me over the road to the crazy house where I belong!"

The dispute raged thru an unsatisfactory breakfast and continued even after Calendine was once more in motion. Heavy clouds obscured the sun which seemed to Scroby to linger persistently behind them.

"Are you sure we're a-headin' east-'ard?"

"Sure," answered Jed sullenly, "straight east." Scroby settled into his seat with a satisfied sigh. They ran thru a straggling village.

"I don't remember this place," said Scroby, "Did we come thru here on our way out?"

"We're on a different road," Jed informed him. "We might as well see as much country as we can," and drove forward thru the gloom. They rode mostly in silence, Jed sullen, Scroby tense and straining eagerly forward in the hope of sighting familiar objects in the landscape. At 12 o'clock they stopped for lunch and as the clouds still persisted, Jed proposed putting up the cover. But Scroby objected.

"Ain't no wind," he said, "what do we want to cover up for, anyhow till it begins to rain. And I wish you'd lower that pane of glass; long as there ain't no wind I like to see the road." Suddenly the clouds began to lift. Jet cast an anxious eye upward.

"We'd better drive in under cover," he suggested. "There's a nice big barn——"

"Pooh!" said Scroby, "'tain't rainin'."

"But it will be before long. We can eat our supper an' then put up the cover——"

He was already backing into the barn. But before he had made any headway with the cover Scroby gave a wild shout and pointed to the clearing sky, where, to his bewildered gaze, the sun appeared coursing gayly down TO SET IN THE EAST. For a moment his anger choked him, but he calmed himself with a desperate effort. Jed was bringing water for the radiator from the farm pump, a farmer boy loping at his heels. Calendine was standing nose to the road when Scroby slipped into the driver's seat.

"What's yer great idear?" demanded Jed, dropping his watering operations and scrambling in beside his partner.

"Time I was takin' a few lessons in drivin'" yelled Scroby, throwing in the clutch as he had seen Jed do. He stepped on the gas and Calendine leaped into action; the boards in the approach to the barn rattled under the tires, the open-mouthed farmer boy stared after them. Jed uttered an exclamation of fright and tried to get the wheel away from Scroby. He believed the old man was following swiftly in the footsteps of his uncle Abner. As the car tore back over the road they had just traveled they struggled together, but Scroby hung on stubbornly.

"No yeh don't, Jed Lawson!" he howled. "Today I do the drivin'!"

"But you can't drive! You'll have us in the ditch! For gosh sake, let up, Scroby! You can't drive till yeh learn!"

"Yes I can! I can drive east'ard! You can't; you only know how to drive west'ard! Now watch me drive east-'ard to God's country, where the sun rises in the east and sets in the west, the way a sun oughter! Gid dep, you old Calendine! Git yer tail off the lines an' strike yer gait! Whoopee! Lift yer feet out o' the mud, you old cripple!"

"Lonzo—oh, for goodness sake, let up! Give me that there wheel! Hold up! There's a team a-comin', you crazy old fool."

SCROBY saw the team at a turn in the road ahead. He did not want to kill the team; he was not so particular about himself or Jed Lawson. He made a weird effort to steer clear of the team, now plunging in fright. He had forgotten which lever shut off the speed—if he had ever known; he had forgotten which way to turn the wheel. He gave it one wild pull, then crawled from behind it and stood up like Washington crossing the Delaware as the car left the road. The cracking of boards sounded like the discharge of firearms as the Calendine splintered her way thru the fence and took to the meadow beyond, floundered thru the marsh for a few feet, rammed an embankment which bordered a ditch, and stopped with great suddenness. This impact saved Scroby, who catapulted clean over the ditch into the oozy peat beyond. As he sat up in a dazed condition he saw something fearful revolving in the air like a tumble-weed or like a flopping, wounded crane. At first he did not connect this aerial display with Jed Lawson at all, but when Jed came to earth with a "Whoosh!" Scroby lay back on the soft peat, grinned, and felt around for a blanket to pull over himself.

The occupants of a passing motor car (they are everywhere and at all hours) gathered up Scroby and Jed Lawson and conveyed them to the Bridgeport Hospital, where for three days Lonzo did not have vitality enough to suffer because he was in a foreign land. After that he did not mind, for Retty was there beside him, holding his hand, feeding him gruel, helping the nurse with his bandages. She it was who was able to explain to the doctors his reiterated lament for "six lost steers!" They had been searching for a possible indentation of the skull as a cause.

"His eyes is bad and his shoulder-blade is broke, but his thinkin' faculties are as straight as a string," she assured the doctor.

"You bet they be!" corroborated Lonzo, groping for Retty's comforting old hand along the bedside. "You bet my thinkin' faculties is in better condition than they've been since that day that young Jones took me to the post-office in his automobile. Yes, sir, if they'd only have give my Uncle Abner about ten thousand feet of real wire an' let him wind it—made him wind it, in fact—he'd a-got over that crazy notion of his'n. For awhile back there I was tetched, but I'm cured of it for good an' all now. Cost me the price of six steers an' these here hospital an' doctor bills, but it's cheap. I can stand it and still have enough left for me an' Retty in our old age. The way to cure a loony is to give him what he's a-loonin' after. If it's a woman, let him marry her. Course, in that case, he's got to stick to her for the rest of his life, but with me an' Calendine they ain't no till-death-do-us-part business about it. I'm plum thru with her. She's goin' to the junk heap an' Retty an' I back to old Doll an' the buggy an' peace an' contentment. . . . You say, doctor, that one of Jed's shafts may not measure up to the other by the matter of an inch or so? Well, I feel that it's altogether Jed's own fault. I'll remind him what a 'tangled web we weave when fust we practice to deceive.' I'll have to give him steady work after this, I s'pose—after this trip of our'n to the Pacific Ocean. And because I ain't wholly without blame I'll make his work as easy for him as I can; I'll let him do the side-hill jobs. Jed's a disagreeable feller to work with, or to eat with, or to sleep with. I know, because I've tried all three. When he works he wants the best hoe and the shortest row; when he eats he wants the biggest egg an' all the cheese; and when he sleeps—say, Doc, were you complainin' awhile ago of the noise Jed makes when his leg hurts? Well, you ought to hear Jed sleep!"

* * *

## Next!

ALICE—At last I have met my ideal man. He is kind-hearted, modest, patient, self-denying and everything that's good—but, alas, he is married.

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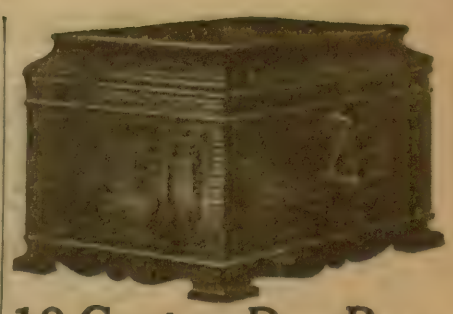

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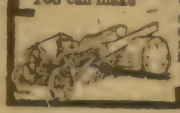

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# The DEVIL'S OWN

## by Randall Parrish

### This Will Enable You to Start the Story

**LIEUTENANT STEPHEN KNOX,** the narrator of the story, was on furlough in the year of our Lord 1832, going down the Mississippi from Rock Island, a fortified camp in a hostile section of Indian country, to St. Louis. He bore dispatches asking for troops to repel the threatened uprising led by Black Hawk. On board the steamship Warrior he became acquainted with

**JUDGE BEAUCAIRE,** a wealthy planter, living north of St. Louis, on the Missouri side. He learned form a conversation that Judge Beaucaire had two daughters,

**RENE BEAUCAIRE** and **ELOISE BEAUCAIRE,** one in reality his daughter, the other his granddaughter, thru the marriage of his son with a quadroon, and hence an octoroon. They were about the same age and appearance. Also on shipboard was

**JOE KIRBY,** a typical river gambler, who frequented the boats looking for victims of his skill and crookedness. Knox watched a card game between Beaucaire and Kirby in which the former wagered everything, including a bill of sale of all his slaves, on a poker hand consisting of four aces, against which Kirby had proceeded to show a royal flush. In the quarrel that ensued, Beaucaire dropped dead of apoplexy. Kirby, that night, in a conversation with Knox, told him sneeringly that he intended to foreclose on the girl, who was seven-eighths white and who had never been freed by law, and sell her down the river for the tremendous money that a beautiful octoroon girl brought in those days.

This story began in No. 43, the Ledger for Oct. 23. Back copies may be obtained from our agents or from newsdealers.

### CHAPTER VI.
### INTO THE BLACK WATER.

THE contemptuous, utterly indifferent manner in which he voiced his villainous purpose, would have crazed any man. Perhaps he intended that it should, altho it was my belief that he merely expressed himself naturally, and with no thought of consequences. The man was so steeped in crime as to be ignorant of all sense of honor, all conception of true manhood. But to me this utterance was the last straw, breaking down every restraint, and leaving me hot, and furious with anger. I forgot the muzzle of the pistol pressed against my side, and the menacing threat in Kirby's low voice. The face of the man was indistinct, a mere outline, but the swift impulse to strike at it was irresistible, and I let him have the blow—a straight-arm jab to the jaw. My clinched knuckles crunched against the flesh, and he reeled back, kept from falling only by the support of the deckhouse. There was no report of a weapon, no outcry, yet, before I could strike again, I was suddenly gripped from behind by a pair of arms, which closed about my throat like a vise, throttling me instantly into silent helplessness. I struggled madly to break free, straining with all the art of a wrestler, exerting every ounce of strength, but the grasp which held me was unyielding, robbing me of breath, and defeating every effort to call for help. Kirby, dazed yet by my sudden blow, and eager to take a hand in the affray, struck me a cowardly blow in the face, and swung his undischarged pistol to a level with my eyes.

"D—n you!" he ejaculated, and for the first time his voice really exhibited temper. "I'd kill you with this, but for the noise. No, by God! there is a safer way than that to settle with you. Have you got the skunk, Carver?"

"You can bet I have, Joe. I kin choke the life out o' him—shall I?"

"No; let up a bit—just enough so he can answer me first. I want to find out what all this means. Now look here, Knox, you're an Army officer, are you?"

"Yes," I managed to gasp, sobbing in an effort to catch breath, as the iron fingers at my throat relaxed slightly.

"Well, then, what is all this to you? Why are you butting in on my game? Was Beaucaire a friend of yours?"

"I can hardly claim that," I admitted. "We never met until I came aboard this steamer. All I am interested in is justice to others."

"To others? Oh, I suppose you mean those girls—you know them, then?"

"I have never even seen them," I said, now speaking more easily. "Thockmorton chanced to tell me about them yesterday, and their condition appealed to me, just as it naturally would to any true man. I thought probably you did not understand the situation, and hoped that if I told you the truth you might respond."

"Oh, you did, did you? You must have figured me as being pretty soft. Well, what do you think now?"

His tone so completely ended my hope of compromise that I replied hotly, "That you are a dirty, piratical cur. I may have doubted your purpose at first, for I am not used to your kind, but this is so no longer. You deliberately ruined and robbed Beaucaire, in order to gain possession of these two girls. You have admitted as much."

He laughed, in no way angered by my plain speech; indeed, it almost seemed as tho he felt complimented.

"Hardly admit, my friend, for that is not my style. I let others do the guessing. What do you think of that, Carver? It seems we rank rather high in the estimation of the young man." His eyes again centered on me. "And you are really not acquainted with either of the ladies."

"No."

"I see; a self-appointed squire of dames; actuated merely by a romantic desire to serve beauty in distress. Extremely interesting, my dear boy. But, see here, Knox," and his tone changed to seriousness. "Let the romance go, and talk sense a minute. You are not going to get very far fighting me alone. You haven't even got the law with you. Even if I cheated Beaucaire, which I do not for a moment admit, there is no proof. The money is mine, and so is the land, and the niggers. You can be ugly, of course, but you cannot overturn the facts. Now I don't care a whoop in h—l for that bunch of miners back there in the cabin. If left alone they will forget all about this affair in an hour. It's nothing to them, and they are no angels if it was. But, in a way, it is different with you. I understand that, and also that you are in a position where you might make me some trouble. People would listen to what you had to say—and some of them might believe you. Now you acknowledge that what has occurred is personally nothing to you; Beaucaire was no special friend, and you don't even know the two girls—all right then, drop the whole matter. I hold no grudge on account of your striking me, and am even willing to share up with you to avoid trouble."

"And if I refuse?"

"Then, of course, we shall be compelled to shut your mouth for you. Self-preservation is the first law."

"Which simply means that you intend to go on, and yield nothing?"

"That is about right. We'll hold tight to what we've got—hey, Carver?"

"That allers bin my way o' doin' business," chimed in the other brutally. "An' we've sure got you, mister soldier man, where we kin handle yer, I reckon."

I looked about at them both, scarcely able to distinguish clearly even their outlines in the dense gloom. The seriousness of my situation, coupled with my helplessness, and inability to achieve the object proposed, was very evident. These men were reckless, and determined, unable to even grasp my point of view. It might, under these circumstances, have been the part of wisdom for me to have sought some means of compromise, but I was young and hot, fiery blood swept thru my veins. The words of Kirby stung me with their breath of insult—his sneering, insolent offer to pay me to remain still.

"You must rank me as one of your own kind," I burst forth. "Now you listen to a plain word from me. If that was intended as an offer, I refuse it. When I first left the cabin, and came here on deck, I honestly believed I could talk with you, Kirby, appeal to your better nature, and gain some consideration for those two girls. Now I know better. From the start this has been the working out of a deliberately planned plot. You, and your confederate, have coolly robbed Beaucaire, and propose to get away with the spoils. Perhaps you will, but that end will not be accomplished thru any assistance of mine. At first I only felt a slight interest in the affair, but from now on I am going to fight you fellows with every weapon I possess."

Kirby chuckled, apparently greatly amused.

"Quite glad, I am sure, for the declaration of war. Fighting has always agreed with me. Might I ask the nature of those weapons?"

"That remains for you to discover," I ejaculated sharply, exasperated by his evident contempt. "Carver, take your dirty hands off of me."

IN SPITE of the fact of their threat, the ready pistol pressing against my ribs, the grip of Carver's fingers at my throat, I did not anticipate any actual assault. That either would really dare injure me seemed preposterous. Indeed my impression was, that Kirby felt such indifference toward my attempt to block his plan, that he would permit me to pass without opposition—certainly without the slightest resort to violence. The action of the two was so swift, so concerted, as tho to some secret signal, that, almost before I realized their purpose, they held me helplessly struggling, and had forced me back against the low rail. Here I endeavored to break away, to shout an alarm, but was already too late. Carver's hands closed remorselessly on my throat, and, when I managed to strike out madly with one free fist, the butt of Kirby's pistol descended on my head, so lacerating my scalp the dripping blood blinded my eyes. The blow partially stunned me, and I half fell, clutching at the rail, yet dimly conscious that the two straining men were uplifting my useless body, Carver swearing viciously as he helped to thrust me outward over the wooden bar. The next instant I fell, the sneering cackle of Kirby's laugh of triumph echoing in my ears until drowned in the splash as I struck the black water below.

**The Flare of a Discharge Almost in My Very Face Fairly Blinded Me, and I Fell Backward Aware of a Burning Sensation in One Shoulder.**

I came back to the surface dazed and weakened, yet sufficiently conscious to make an intelligent struggle for life. The over-hang of the rapidly passing boat still concealed me from the observation of those above on the deck, and the advantage of permitting them to believe that the blow on my head had resulted in drowning, together with the knowledge that I must swiftly get beyond the stroke of that deadly wheel, flashed instantly thru my brain. It was like a tonic, reviving every energy. Waiting only to inhale one deep breath of air, I plunged back once more into the depths, and swam strongly under water. The efforts proved successful, for when I again ventured to emerge, gasping and exhausted, the little Warrior had swept past, and become merely a shapeless outline, barely visible above the surface of the river. Even if the two men had rushed to the stern, seeking thus to ascertain what had happened to their victim, they could not have detected my presence in that darkness, or determined whether or not I had met death in the depths, or been crushed lifeless by those revolving paddles.

Slowly treading water, my lips held barely above the surface, I drew in deep draughts of cool night air, my mind becoming more active as hope returned. The blow I had received was a savage one, and pained dully, but the cold water in which I had been immersed had caused the bleeding to cease, and likewise revived all my faculties. The water was so icy, still fed by the winter snow of

**Suddenly, From Just Above Me, and Certainly Not Six Feet Distant, a Man Spoke Gruffly.**

the North, as to make me conscious of chill, and awaken within me a fear of cramps. The steamer melted swiftly away into nothingness, and the last indication of its presence in the distance was the faint gleam of a stern light piercing the night shadows. The very fact that no effort was made to stop was sufficient proof that Thockmorton in the wheelhouse remained unconscious of what had occurred on the deck below. My fate might never be discovered, or suspected. I was alone, submerged in the great river, the stars overhead alone piercing the night shadows. They seemed cold, and far away, their dull glow barely sufficient to reveal the dim outline of the western shore; and even this would have remained invisible except for the trees lining the higher bank beyond, and silhouetted against the slightly lighter background of sky. In the other direction all was apparently water, a turbulent waste, and one glance deciding my action, I quickly struck out, partially breasting the downward sweep of the current, in a desperate struggle to attain land.

I discovered this to be no easy task, as the swirl of the river bore strongly toward the opposite shore, yet I had always been a powerful swimmer, and altho now seriously hampered by boots, and heavy, sodden clothing, succeeded in making steady progress. A log swept by me, white bursts of spray illuminating its sides, and I grappled it gratefully, my fingers finding grip on the sodden bark. Using this for partial support, and ceasing to battle so desperately against the down-sweep of the current, I managed finally to work my way into an eddy, struggling onward until my feet at last touched bottom at the end of a low, out-cropping point of sand. This proved to be a mere spit, but I waded ashore, water streaming from my clothing, conscious now of such complete exhaustion that I sank instantly outstretched upon the sand, gasping painfully for breath, every muscle and nerve throbbing.

The night was intensely still, black, impenetrable. It seemed as tho no human being could inhabit that desolate region. I lifted my head to listen for the slightest sound of life, and strained my eyes to detect the distant glimmer of a light in any direction. Nothing rewarded the effort. Yet surely along here on this long-settled west bank of the Mississippi I could not be far removed from those of my race, for I knew that all along this river shore were cultivated plantations and little frontier towns irregularly served by passing steamboats. We had not been far to the northward of St. Louis at midnight, and Thockmorton confidently expected to tie up the Warrior at the wharf before that city early the next morning. So, surely, somewhere near at hand, concealed amid the gloom, would be discovered the habitations of men—either the pretentious mansion of some prosperous planter, or the humble huts of his black slaves. Could I attain to either one I would be certain of welcome, for hospitality without questioning was the code of the frontier.

The night air increased in chilliness as the hours approached dawn, and I shivered in my wet clothes, altho this only served to arouse me into immediate action. As I again attempted to move I realized more than ever my weakness and exhaustion from struggle, but I succeeded in gaining my feet, and stumbled forward along the narrow spit of sand, until I attained a bank of firm earth, up which I crept painfully, emerging at last upon a fairly level spot, softly carpeted with grass, and surrounded by a grove of forest trees. The shadows here were dense, but my feet encountered a depression in the soil, which I soon identified as a rather well-defined path leading inland. Assured that this must point the way to some door, as it was evidently no wild animal trail, I felt my way forward cautiously, eager to attain shelter, and the comfort of a fire.

The grove was of limited extent, and, as I emerged from beneath its shadow, I came suddenly to a patch of cultivated land, bisected by a small stream, the path I was following leading along its bank. Holding to this for guidance, within less than a hundred yards I came to the house I was seeking, a small, log structure, overshadowed by a gigantic oak, and standing isolated and alone. It appeared dark and silent, altho evidently inhabited, as an ax stood leaning against the jamb of the door, while a variety of utensils were scattered about. Believing the place to be occupied by a slave, or possibly some white squatter, I advanced directly to the door, and called loudly to whoever might be within.

There was no response, and, believing the occupant asleep, I used the ax handle, rapping sharply. Still no voice answered, altho I felt convinced of some movement inside, leading me to believe that the sleeper had slipped from his bed and was approaching the door. Again I rapped, this time with greater impatience over the delay, but not the slightest sound rewarded the effort. Shivering there in my wet clothes, the stubborn obduracy of the fellow awakened my anger.

"Open up, there," I called commandingly, "or else I'll take this ax and break down your door."

In the darkness I had been unobservant of a narrow slide in the upper panel, but had scarcely uttered these words of threat when the flare of a discharge almost in my very face fairly blinded me, and I fell backward, aware of a burning sensation in one shoulder. The next instant I lay outstretched on the ground, and it seemed to me that life was fast ebbing from my body. Twice I endeavored vainly to rise, but at the second attempt my brain reeled dizzily and I sank back unconscious.

## CHAPTER VII.

### PICKING UP THE THREADS.

I TURNED my head slightly on the hard shuck pillow and gazed curiously about. When my eyes had first opened all I could perceive was the section of log wall against which I rested, but now, after painfully turning over, the entire interior of the single-room cabin was revealed. It was humble enough in all its appointments, the walls quite bare, the few chairs fashioned from half-barrels, a packing box for a table, and the narrow bed on which I lay, constructed from saplings lashed together, covered with a coarse ticking, packed with straw. The floor was of hard, dry clay; a few live coals remained, smoking in the open fireplace, while a number of garments, among them to be recognized my own clothing, dangled from wooden pegs driven into the chinks of the farther wall. I surveyed the entire circuit of the room wonderingly, a vague memory of what had lately occurred returning slowly to mind. To all appearances I was there alone, altho close beside me stood a low stool, supporting a tin basin partially filled with water. As I moved I became conscious of a dull pain in my left shoulder, which I also discovered to be tightly bandaged. It was late in the day, for the rays of the sun streamed in thru the single window, and lay a pool of gold along the center of the floor.

I presume it was not long, yet my thoughts were so busy it seemed as if I must have been lying there undisturbed for some time, before the door opened quietly, and I became aware of another occupant of the room. Paying no attention to me he crossed to the fireplace, stirred the few smouldering embers into flame, placing upon these some bits of

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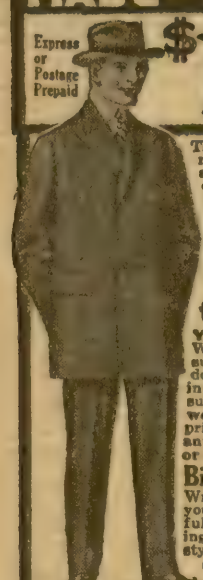

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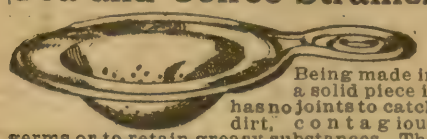

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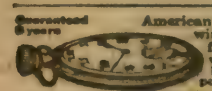

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dried wood, and then idly watched as they caught fire. The newcomer was a negro, gray-haired but still vigorous, evidently a powerful fellow judging from his breadth of shoulder, and possessing a face denoting considerable intelligence. Finally he straightened up and faced me, his eyes widening with interest as he caught mine fastened upon him, his thick lips instantly parting in a good-natured grin.

"De good Lord be praised!" he ejaculated, in undisguised delight. "Is yer really awake agin, honey? De docthar say he done thought ye'd cum round by terday sure, sah. Enyhow I's almighty glad fer ter see yer wid dem eyes open onct mor'—yas, sah, I sure am."

"The doctor?" I questioned in surprise, my voice sounding strange and far away. "Have I been here long?"

"Goin' on 'bout ten days, sah. Yer was powerful bad hurt an' out o' yer head, I reckon."

"What was it that happened? Did some one shoot me?"

The negro scratched his head, shuffling his bare feet uneasily on the dirt floor.

"Yas, sah, Mister Knox," he admitted with reluctance. "I's powerful sorry, sah, but I was de boy whut plugged yer. Yer see, sah, it done happened dis-away," and the black face registered genuine distress. "Thar's a mean gang o' white folks 'round yere thet's took it inter their heads ter lick every free nigger, an' when yer done come up ter my door in de middle ob de night, a cussin', an' a-threatenin' fer ter break in, I just nat'larly didn't wanter be licked, an'—so I blazed away. I's powerful sorry 'bout it now, sah."

"No doubt it was more my fault than yours. You are a free negro, then?"

"Yas, sah. I done belong onct to Colonul Silas Carlton, sah, but afore he died, just because I done saved his boy frum drownin' in de ribber, de ol' Colonul he set me free, an' give me a patch o' lan' ter raise corn on."

"What is your name?"

"Pete, sah. Free Pete is whut mostly de white folks call me." He laughed, white teeth showing and the whites of his eyes. "Yer see, thar am a powerful lot o' Petes round 'bout yere, sah."

I drew a deep breath, conscious of weakness as I endeavored to change position.

"All right, Pete; now I want to understand things clearly. You shot me, supposing I was making an assault on you. Your bullet lodged in my shoulder. What happened then?"

"Well, after a while, sah, thar wan't no mor' noise, an' I reckoned I'd either done hit yer er else ye'd run away. An' thar ye wus, sah, a lyin' on yer back like ye wus ded. Just so soon as I saw ye, I know'd as how ye never wus no nigger-hunter, but a stranger in des yere parts. So I dragged ye inside de cabin, an' washed up yer hurts. But ye never got no bettah, so I got skeered, an' went hoofin' it down fer de docthar at Beaucaire Landin', sah, an' when he cum back along wid me he dug the bullet outer yer shoulder, an' left som truck fer me ter giv' yer. He's done been yere three times, sah."

From Beaucaire Landing—is that a town?"

"A sorter a town, sah; 'bout four miles down ribber."

The mentioning of this familiar word brought back instantly to my darkened understanding all those main events leading up to my presence in this neighborhood. Complete memory returned, every separate incident sweeping thru my brain—Kirby, Carver, the fateful game of cards in the cabin of the Warrior, the sudden death of the Judge, the mob anger I sought to curb, the struggle on deck, my being thrown overboard, and the danger threatening the two innocent daughters of Beaucaire. And I had actually been lying in this negro hut, burning up with fever, helplessly delirious, for ten days. What had already occurred in that space of time? What more villainy had been concocted and carried out? What more did the negro know?—something surely, for now I remembered he had addressed me by name.

"Now, see here, Pete," I began earnestly. "How did you learn what my name was?"

"De docthar he foun' dat out, sah. I reckon he thought maybe he ought ter know; fearin' as how ye might die. He done looked thru yer pockets, sah, an' he took two papers whut he foun' dar away wid him. He done tol' me as how yer was an offercer in de Army—a leftenant, er sumthin'—an' thet dem papers ought fer ter be sint ter de Gov'ner et onct. De las' time he wus yere he tol' me thet he wint down ter Saint Louee hisself, an' done gif bof dem papers ter Gov'ner Clark. So yer don't need worry none 'bout dem no mor'."

I sank back onto the hard, pillow greatly relieved by this information. The burden of official duty had been taken from me. I was now on furlough, and free to act as I pleased. I suddenly became conscious that I was hungry. I expressed a desire for food, and the negro instantly busied himself over the fire. I watched his movements with interest, altho my thoughts quickly drifted to other matters.

"Have you picked up any news lately from the Beaucaire plantation?" I asked, at last.

He twisted his head about at sound of my voice.

"I heerd say dey done brought de body ob de ol' Jedge home, sah—he died mighty sudden sumwhar up de ribber. Thet's 'bout all I know."

"When was this?"

"'Bout a week, maybe morn'n dat ago. De Warrior brought de body down, sah."

"The Warrior? Did any one go ashore with it?"

"'Pears like thar wus two men stopped off at de Landin'. I disremembers de names, but one ob 'em was an ol' friend ob de Jedge's."

I TURNED my head slightly, but only for a moment. The two men were in all probability Kirby and his satellite, Carver. Evidently they intended to lose no time. The accident, the period of my unconsciousness, had left the villains ample opportunity in which to carry out the details of their devilish plot. The silence had convinced them of my death, leaving them nothing to fear, no opposition to guard against. Doubtless the Beaucaire property was already legally in Kirby's possession, and any possible chance I have once had to foil him in his nefarious purpose had now completely vanished.

To be sure I had reasoned out no definite means whereby I could circumvent his theft, except to take legal advice, confer with Governor Clark, and warn those threatened girls of their danger. But now it was too late even to do this. And yet it might not be. If Kirby and his confederate believed that I was dead, were convinced that I had perished beneath the waters of the river, they might feel safe in taking time to strengthen their position; might delay final action, hoping thus to make their case seem more plausible. If Kirby was really serious in his intention of marrying Beaucaire's daughter he would naturally hesitate immediately to acknowledge winning the property at cards, and thus indirectly being the cause of her father's death. He would be quite likely to keep this hidden from the girl for a while, until he tried his luck at love. If love failed, then the disclosure might be made to drive the young woman to him; a threat to render her complacent. The negro evidently knew very little as to what had occurred, merely the floating gossip of the slave quarters, and some few things the doctor had mentioned. But there was a man living at the Landing who would be informed as to all the facts.

"I believe the Judge left two daughters, did he not?"

"Yas, sah—mighty pretty gals dey am, too."

"And they still remain in possession of the house?"

"I reckon dey do, sah. Pears like the dochtar sed sumthin' 'bout treating one ob dem—Miss Eloise—one time he wus ober yere. Sure, dey's dere, all right."

"Do you know a lawyer named Haines?"

"Livin' down at de Landin'? Yas, sah."

I lifted myself up in the bed, too deeply interested to lie still any longer.

"Now, listen, Pete," I explained earnestly. "I've got sufficient money to pay you well for all you do, and, just as soon as you get me something to eat, I want you to go down to the Landing and bring Lawyer Haines back here with you. Just tell him a sick white man wants to see him at once, and not a word to any one else. You might tell Haines this is a private matter—you understand?"

"Yas, sah," the whites of his eyes rolling. "He done know ol' Pete, an' I'll sure bring him back yere."

It was dark when they came, the fire alone lighting up the interior of the dingy cabin with a fitful glow of red flame. I had managed to get out of bed and partially dress myself, feeling stronger, and in less pain as I exercised my muscles. They found me seated before the fireplace, indulging in a pot of fresh coffee. Haines was a small, sandy-complexioned man, with a straggling beard and light blue eyes. He appeared competent enough, a bundle of nervous energy, and yet there was something about the fellow which instantly impressed me unfavorably—probably his short, jerky manner of speech, and his inability to look straight at you.

"Pete has been telling me who you are, Lieutenant," he said, as we shook hands, "and putting some other things together I can guess the rest. You came south on the Warrior."

"From Fort Armstrong—yes; who told you this?"

"Captain Thockmorton. I saw him in St. Louis, and he seemed deeply grieved by your sudden disappearance. No one on board was able to explain what had occurred."

"Yet there were two men on the boat who could have explained, if they had cared to do so," I answered dryly. "I mean Kirby and Carver; they were the ones who threw me overboard."

He dropped into a chair, his keen, ferret eyes on my face.

"Kirby and Carver? They went ashore with the Judge's body at the Landing. So there is a story back of all this," he exclaimed jerkily. "D—n it, I thought as much. Was Beaucaire killed?"

"No—not at least by any violence. No doubt the shock of his loss hastened his death. Surely you must know that he risked all he possessed on a game of cards and lost?"

"Thockmorton knew something about it, and there were other rumors floating about the Landing, but I have heard no details."

"You did not see the two men, then?"

"No, I was not at home, and they went on down the river the next day on a keelboat. You saw the play?"

"I saw the last part of the game and was convinced, as all the others present were, that the Judge was deliberately ruined for a purpose. I believe it was all planned beforehand, but of this we have no tangible proof."

"His opponent was Joe Kirby?"

"And a fellow named Carver, a mere hanger-on."

Haines wet his lips, his eyes narrowing to mere slits, his professional nature coming to the front.

"First, let me ask you why you believe Beaucaire was cheated?" he piped. "I know Joe Kirby, and consider him quite capable of such a trick, but we shall need more than suspicion to circumvent his scheme."

"I have every reason, Haines, to feel convinced that both Kirby and Carver trailed Baucaire up the river with the intention of plucking him. Kirby practically confessed this to me, boastingly, afterwards. All the way down he was bantering the Judge to play. That last night he so manipulated the cards—or rather Carver did, for it was his deal—as to deceive Beaucaire into firmly believing that he held an absolutely unbeatable hand—he was dealt four aces and a king."

The lawyer leaned forward, breathing heavily.

"Four aces! Only one hand is better than that, and it would be impossible to get such a hand out of one pack."

"That is exactly true, Haines. I am no card player, but I do know that much about the game. Yet, Kirby took the pot with a royal flush. Now, either he, or Carver, slipped an extra ace into the pack, or else Beaucaire did. In my opinion the Judge had no chance to work such a trick. And that's the case, as it stands."

Haines jumped to his feet and began pacing the dirt floor excitedly, his hands clasped behind his back.

"By God, man!" he cried, pausing suddenly. "Even if he did have a chance, the Judge never did it—never. He was a good sport, and always played a straight game. You say he bet everything he had?"

"To the last dollar—Kirby egged him on. Besides the money, a deed to his land, and a bill of sale for his negroes were on the table."

"The field hands, you mean?"

"Yes, and the house servants. Kirby insisted that he write these words, 'This includes every chattel slave legally


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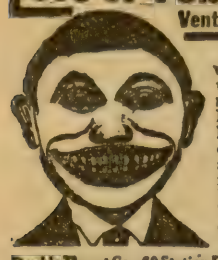

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belonging to me,' and made Beaucaire sign it in that form."

Haines' face was white, his eyes staring at me incredulously.

"God help us, man! Do you know what that means?" he gasped.

"I am almost afraid I do," I answered, yet startled by his manner. "That was why I sent for you. Would that include his son's daughter?"

He buried his face in his hands.

"Yes," he confessed brokenly. "To the best of my knowledge Rene Beaucaire is a slave."

## CHAPTER VIII.

### I DECIDE MY DUTY.

THE silence following this blunt statement was sickening. Up to that moment, in spite of every fact brought to my knowledge, I had secretly believed this condition of affairs impossible. Surely somewhere, thru some legal form, Judge Beaucaire had guarded the future safety of this young woman, whom he had admitted into his household. Any other conception seemed impossible, too monstrous, too preposterous for consideration. But now the solemn words of the lawyer, his own legal counselor, brought conviction, and for the moment all power of speech deserted me. It was actually true then—the girl was a slave, a thing belonging to Kirby. Nothing broke the stillness within the cabin, except the sharp crackling of flames in the open fireplace and the heavy breathing of the negro. He was seated on the edge of the bed, his black face showing a greenish tint, and revealing puzzled amazement, with wide-opened eyes staring blankly at Haines, who stood motionless before the fire.

"Whut wus dat yer sed, Mister Haines?" he asked thickly. "You say as how Missus Rene Beaucaire is a slave, sah? Pears like I don't just rightfully understan'."

"Still that is true, Pete," and the lawyer lifted his head and surveyed us both. "She is the illegitimate daughter of Delia, Judge Beaucaire's housekeeper; her father was Adelbert Beaucaire, the Judge's only son. No one knows where he is, dead or alive."

"De good Lord! An' de ol' Jedge never set her free?"

The lawyer shook his head, words evidently failing him.

"But are you absolutely certain of this?" I broke in impatiently. "Have you searched the records?"

"Not only searched them, Knox, but, before he left for the North on this last trip, Beaucaire was in my office, and I practically forced him to acknowledge the negligence. He even authorized me to draw up the necessary papers for him to sign on his return—for both Delia and the girl. They are in my desk now, unexecuted. There is no mistake—Rene is legally a slave, together with her mother."

"My God!" I exclaimed. "What an indictment of slavery. Could any one conceive a more horrible position! Here is a young girl, educated, refined, of more than ordinary attractiveness Thockmorton tells me, brought up amid every comfort, and led to believe herself the honored daughter of the house, awakening in an instant to the fact that she is a slave, with negro blood in her veins—a mere chattel, owned body and soul by a gambler, won in a card game, and to be sold to the highest bidder. Haines, I tell you Kirby knew all this."

"Kirby knew? Why do you say that?"

"He boasted of it. I thought little about what he said at the time, but I believe now one of his main objects was to gain possession of this girl. That would account for his insistence upon that peculiar clause in the bill of sale—he either suspected, or had discovered thru some source, that Rene Beaucaire had never been set free. For some reason he desired possession of both Beaucaire girls; they meant more to him than either the money or the property. This card game gave him one; the other——"

"Eloise, you mean? Did the fellow threaten her?"

"Here is what he said sneeringly, you can judge yourself what he meant, 'She's worth fifty thousand dollars by her mother's will, and I intend to win her if I can, fair means or foul.'"

Haines did not speak for some moments, his eyes on my face. Then he paced back and forth across the floor, finally stopping before the fire.

"This is as near hell as anything I ever knew," he said, "and so far as I can see there is no legal way out of it. We are utterly helpless to assist."

"We are not," I answered hotly, "if we are men. There may be no legal way in which we can beat this villain, but there is an illegal one, unless we are already too late, and I propose to use it, whether you join me or not."

"You have a plan? What is it?"

"The only one feasible. I thought of its possibility before on the boat, when a suspicion of this situation first came to me. You are sure the girls are still at the plantation house? That they know nothing of this condition?"

"I have reason to believe so. Delia was buying provisions at the Landing yesterday; I talked with her a moment."

"And you said that Kirby and Carver were only in town for one night, leaving the next morning on a keelboat for St. Louis. Probably they did not visit the plantation at all, unless it was to scout around. My idea is they were not quite ready to take possession; that they have gone to St. Louis to file the papers, and will come back with officers prepared to execute them. This means that we must work fast to get out of their way."

"What do you propose doing?"

"Let me ask a question first. Is it true that Eloise Beaucaire is heiress to fifty thousand dollars thru her mother's estate?"

"Yes, I invested most of it."

"In what?"

"New Orleans property principally."

"Then it is safe enough whatever happens. The only thing we can do is this: Tell those girls and the mother the whole truth—tell them at once, before Kirby can return, and then help them to get out of this country. It is not necessary for Eloise to go, unless she desires to, but there is no other safe course for Delia and Rene. They must reach a Northern State before Kirby can lay hands on them. Could Delia pass for a white woman?"

"Not in the South; still she could travel as Rene's maid. But I do not believe it is possible for the two to escape in that way, Knox. Understand, I'd be willing to risk it if there were any show. How can it be done? On the average at this time of year there isn't a steamboat along here once a month. If we did get them onto a boat they would have to travel straight south as far as the Ohio. Kirby wouldn't be more than a day or two behind them, with friends on every boat on the river. Illinois is no free State for fugitive slaves—they might just as well be caught in Missouri as over there. There is not one chance in a thousand that they make it."

"And less than that, if they remain here for Kirby to get his hands on," I retorted bitterly. "Now look here, Haines. I am going to carry out this plan alone, if you will not back me in it. I am not talking about steamboats; they could travel by night, and hide along shore during the day. All they would need would be two negro oarsmen, sufficient food, and a boat big enough to carry them safely. You have small boats, surely?"

"I got one, Massa Knox,' burst out Pete eagerly. "She's down by de mouth ob de creek, sah, an' she sure am a mighty good boat. We could load her up right here, an' I'd be one ob de niggers fer ter take dem ladies down ribber. I'se a free boy, an' nobody care whar I done go."

These unexpected words heartened me, strengthened my own resolve, and I obeyed my first impulse, instantly crossing the room and frankly extending my hand to the surprised negro.

"That sounds like a man, Pete," I exclaimed warmly. "Yes, of course I mean it—shake hands. You are white enough for me, boy, and I do not propose letting you do any more than I am willing to do. I'll go along with you on this trip. I have sixty days furlough."

I turned and faced the lawyer, my mind firmly settled on the scheme, and determined upon carrying it out instantly.

"And now, what about you, Haines?" I demanded. "Are you ready to help? Come, man, surely this is not something we have any time to debate. Kirby is liable to show up at any moment with full authority, and the sheriff to back him. It is still early in the evening and we must work tonight, if at all."

"You haven't the strength for such a venture," he protested.

"Haven't I?" and I laughed. "Oh, yes, I have. I am young and this wound is nothing. I may be a bit stiff in the shoulder for a few days, but I can pull an oar with one hand. That never will stop me. Are you with us?"

He was slow in replying, and, as I eagerly watched his face, I could almost comprehend the working of the lawyer mind. He saw and argued every doubt, considered every danger.

"In spirit, yes," he answered at last, "but not physically. I believe under the circumstances you are justified, Knox. Perhaps I'd do the same thing if I was in your place and had your youth behind me. But I am a lawyer, 50 years old, and this is my home. If the story ever got out that I took part in nigger-stealing, that would be the end of me in Missouri. As you say, you are a young man, and I reckon you were not brought up in the South, either. That makes a difference. You can take the risk, but about all I can do will be to keep a quiet tongue in my head. Nobody will ever learn what has happened thru me—I'll promise you that. But that is all I can promise."

"Yet you acknowledge this is the only way? No legal course is open to us?"

"Absolutely none. If there was I should never consent to be a party to this plan, or shield you in any way. Kirby has undoubtedly got the law with him. We cannot establish fraud; the property actually belongs to him—both mother and daughter are his slaves."

"And how about the other girl—Eloise?"

"He has no legal hold on her; she is a free white woman. He could only hope to overcome her resistance by threats. The plantation is irrevocably lost to the Beaucaires, but she possesses the power to defy him because of her mother's property. If Kirby marries


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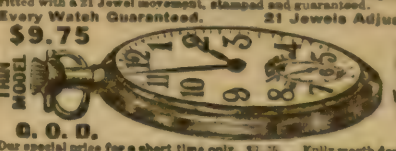


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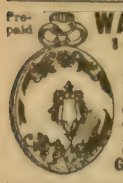

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her, it will only be thru her consent."

He picked up his hat from the table, and a stout stick he had brought along with him, taking a step toward the door.

"I might as well tell you I consider this a mad scheme," he paused to add gravely, "and that it will probably fail. There is a possible chance of success, I admit, and for that reason I permit you to go ahead with it, and pledge myself to keep the secret. I was rather intimately associated with Beaucaire for a number of years, and to see his granddaughter sold into slavery, even if she does have a drop of nigger blood in her veins, is more than I can stand, without giving her a chance to get away. That is why I consent to abet a crime, and keep still about it. But beyond that I'll not go. I am a Southerner, Knox; my father owned slaves. I believe in the system, and have always upheld it. Nobody in Missouri hates a Black Abolitionist worse than I do; if any one had ever said I would help a nigger run away, I'd call him a liar in a minute. Do you understand the position this d—d affair puts me into?"

"Yes, I do, Haines," and I held out my hand to him, with fresh cordiality. "It is uncommonly white of you to even go that far. On the other hand I was brought up to despise slavery. I'll pledge you this—for Pete here, as well as myself—that if we are caught, your name will never be mentioned. Have you any advice to give?"

HE PAUSED uncertainly, his hand on the latch, the firelight flashing up into his face.

"Only this," he said slowly. "If I were you I'd never attempt to go south. Below St. Louis, boats are numerous, and you would be almost certain to be discovered. If Kirby chases you—and I know him well enough to be sure he will—he will naturally take it for granted that you have headed for the Ohio. The very fact that the fugitives are women would convince him of this. To my mind the one chance of your getting away, lies to the north—up the Illinois."

"That thought was in my mind also," I admitted, thoroly satisfied now that he was really friendly, and to be trusted. "I have been told that the settlers north of that stream came mostly from New England—is that true?"

"To a large extent. We have reason to believe there is an underground road in operation from the river to Canada, and many a runaway nigger makes the trip every year. That ought to be your best course, but there is no time now to put the women in the care of those men. Of course I don't know who they are—perhaps Pete does?"

"No, sah," protested the black quickly. "'Pears like I never heerd tell 'bout dem. I'se a free nigger, sah."

The lawyer's shrewd eyes twinkled.

"And that is exactly why, you black rascal, I believe you really do know. I reckon, Knox, he'll tell you what he wouldn't tell me. Anyhow, good luck to you both, and good night."

The door closed behind him, and the negro and I were alone. All at once I realized the desperate nature of this adventure I had undertaken, and its possible consequences. Haines' words had driven it home to my mind, causing me to comprehend the viewpoint of this neighborhood, the hatred men felt for a nigger-stealer, and what my fate would be if once caught in the act. Yet the die was already cast; I had pledged myself to action; was fully committed to the attempted rescue of Rene Beaucaire, and no thought of any retreat once occurred to me. I opened the door cautiously, glancing out into the night, to thus assure myself we were alone, closed it again, and came back. The negro still remained seated on the edge of the bed, digging his toes into the hard earth of the floor.

"Pete" I began earnestly. "You trust me, don't you? You do not suspect me of being any slave-hunter?"

"No, sah, Massa Knox, I ain't 'feared o' yer—yers one o' dem Down Easterners."

"Well, not exactly that. I came from a slave State, but my family is of New England blood and breeding. I am just as much your friend as tho you were white. Now you and I have got a hard job before us."

"Yas, sah, we sure has."

"And the first thing we have got to do, is to trust each other. Now I am going to ask you a question—is that the best way for us to go, up the Illinois?"

He was slow to answer, evidently turning the whole matter over in his mind. I waited impatiently, feeling the delay to be a serious loss of time.

"Well then, let me put this differently. Have you ever assisted any slaves to run away from Missouri?"

"Well, Massa Knox, I reckon thet maybe I knew'd 'bout som' gittin' away—'pears like I did, sah."

"And these escaped by way of the Illinois?"

His dumb, almost pathetic eyes met mine pleadingly, but some expression of my face served to yield him courage.

"I—I reckon I—I don't know much 'bout all dis, Massa Knox," he stammered doubtfully, his hands locking and unlocking nervously. "I—I sure don'; an' fer de mattah o' dat, ther ain't nobody whut does, sah. All I does know, fer sure, is dat if a nigger onct gets as fer as a certain white man up de ribber, 'bout whar de mouth ob de Illinois is, he's got a mighty good chance fer ter reach Canada. De next place whar he's most likely ter stop is Beardstown, long wid som' sorter preacher whut lives thar. An' thet's as fer as they ever done tol' me, sah."

"About this first white man—the one near the mouth of the Illinois—do you know his name?"

Pete rose to his feet, and crossed the room to where I stood, bending down until his lips were close to my ear. His answer was spoken in a thick whisper.

"Massa Knox, I never did 'spect to say dis ter no white man, but it seems I just nat'larly got fer ter tell yer. I heerd thet man say onct just whut yer did, thet a nigger wus just as much his frien' as tho he wus white—thet it wan't de skin nohow what counted, but de heart. No, sah, I ain't feered fer ter tell yer, Massa Knox. He's got a cabin hid way back in de bluffs, whar nobody don't go, 'cept dem who know whar it is. I reckon he don't do nuthin' but hunt an' fish nohow—leastways he don't raise no corn, nor truck ter sell. He's a tall, lanky man, sah, sorter thin, with a long beard, an' his name wus Amos Shrunk. I reckon maybe he's a Black Abolitionist, sah."

"Quite likely, I should say. And you could take a boat from here to his place?"

"Sure, the darkest night yer ever see. Inter the mouth ob a crick, 'bout a hundred rods up de Illinois. Den thar's a path, a sorter path, whut goes ter de cabin; but most genir'ly he's down thar waitin' et night. Yer see dey never sure knows when som' nigger is goin' fer ter git away—only mostly it's at night."

This knowledge greatly simplified matters. If there was already in operation an organized scheme by means of which fugitives from this side of the great river were taken thru to Canada, protected and assisted along the way by the friends of freedom, then all we would be required to do in this case would be to safely convoy the unfortunate Rene and her mother in Pete's boat up the river, and there turn them over to the care of this Amos Shrunk. Undoubtely he could be trusted to see to it that they were promptly forwarded to others, fanatics like himself, who would swiftly pass them along at night across the Illinois prairies, until beyond all danger of pursuit. Hundreds, no doubt, had traveled this route, and, once these two were in Shrunk's care our responsibility would be over with. It was to me a vast relief to realize this. The distance to the mouth of the Illinois could not be far, surely not to exceed fifty miles as the river ran. It ought not to prove difficult to baffle Kirby for that short distance, and then we would be free to return, and no one could prove any charge against us. Indeed it was my purpose to immediately proceed down the river on my furlough, and probably it would never so much as be suspected that the negro had been away. Ever since my boyhood I had listened to stories concerning the operation of underground railroads by means of which slaves were assisted to freedom, and now felt no hesitancy in confiding these two women to tne care of their operators. The only important fact fronting us was that we must act quickly, before Kirby and his aides, armed with legal authority, could return—this very night.

"Pete," I said shortly, my tone unconsciously one of authority, "we must be out of here before daylight, and safely hidden somewhere up the river. The first thing to be done, and the hardest, is to explain to those women the situation, and persuade them to accompany us. They may not believe my story; that was why I was so anxious to have Haines go to the house. They would have confidence in him. Do they know you?"

"Lord love yer—ob course dey do. I'se knowed all ob 'em for a long while, sah. Why, when I furst don' see dem Beaucaire gals dey wus just infants. Dey'll sure believe ol' Pete."

"Well, we can only try our best. Have you any conveyance here?"

"Any whut, sah?"

"Any wheeled vehicle in which we can ride to Beaucaire, and by means of which we can bring the women back? The distance is too far to walk."

"I'se got a sorter khart, an' an ol' muel, sah. Dey's out yonder in de bush."

"Hitch them up at once, while I put a few things we may need in the boat. Show me how to find it."

He pointed out the path, with the directions necessary, and disappeared, while I returned to the cabin, dragged a blanket from off the bed, and filled it with whatever miscellaneous articles of food I was able to discover about the place. My wound, now that I was busily engaged, troubled me very little, and, gathering the four corners of the blanket together, I easily transported this stock of provisions to the river bank, and safely stowed them away in the boat found there. I returned to discover the mule and cart ready, and a few moments later we were creaking slowly along a


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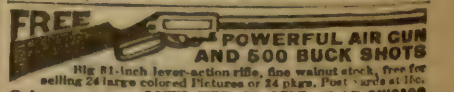
**FREE**  **POWERFUL AIR CUN AND 500 BUCK SHOTS**

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gloomy wood road, jolting over the stumps, with Pete walking beside the animal's head, whispering encouragement into the flapping ear. The great adventure had begun.

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE HOME OF JUDGE BEAUCAIRE.

THE road we followed appeared to be endless, and so rough that I soon climbed down from my seat, an unplaned board, uncomfortable enough under any conditions, in the swaying, bumping cart, and stumbled blindly along behind, tripping over stumps in the darkness, and wrenching my ankles painfully in deep ruts. Progress was slow, not only because of the difficulties of the passage, but equally on account of the obstinacy of the mule. Indeed, it required no small diplomacy on the part of the negro to induce the animal to proceed at all, and finally, despairing of the efficiency of words, he drew a club, evidently reserved for such emergencies, from the interior of the cart, and gave utterance to an ultimatum. Following this display of force our advance became a trifle more rapid.

I endeavored to think, to plan more definitely my course upon arriving at the Beaucaire plantation, but discovered it quite impossible to concentrate my mind upon anything. My entire attention had to be riveted on the intricacies of the road, which wound in and out among the bluffs, down one gully and up another, until I finally lost all sense of direction, and merely stumbled on after the dark outlines of the cart, thru a black cave formed by the branches of over-arching trees.

It was considerably after 10 o'clock when we emerged upon an open plateau, and a glimmer of stars overhead revealed to me afar off the silver thread of the great river. Even in that dim light I could trace its winding course along the valley, and the view by daylight from this point must have been a delight to the eye. Pete stopped the straining mule, a feat not at all difficult of accomplishment, the animal's sides rising and falling as he wheezed for breath, and came back to where I stood, staring about at the dimly perceived objects in the foreground.

"Out dar am de Beaucaire place," he announced, as soon as he could distinguish my presence, waving his arm to indicate the direction. "An' I reckon we bettah not ride no further, fer if Alick shud smell corn, he'd nat'larly raise dis whol' neighborhood—he's got a powerful voice, sah."

"Equal to his appetite no doubt."

"Yas, sah; that's mostly whut Alick am."

"How far away is the house?"

"Likely 'bout a hundred yards. Yer see dat light out yonder; well dat's it, an' I reckon de ladies mus' be up yet, keepin' de lamp burnin'. Here's de slave cabins 'long de edge ob de woods, but dey's all dark. What's yer a goin' fer ter do now, Massa Knox?"

I was conscious that my heart was beating rapidly, and that my mind was anything but clear. The problem fronting me did not appear so easily solved, now that I was fairly up against it, and yet there seemed only one natural method of procedure. I must go at my unpleasant task boldly, and in this case only the truth would serve. I was an officer in the United States Army, and had in my pocket papers to prove my identity. These would vouch for me as a gentleman, and yield me a measure of authority. And this fact, once established, ought to give me sufficient standing in the eyes of those girls to compel from them a respectful hearing. I would tell the story exactly as I knew it, concealing nothing, and adding no unnecessary work, outline my plan of action, and then leave them to decide what they thought best to do. This was the simple, sensible way, and I had implicit faith that they would accept my statement, believable as the situation was, proof was and believe my offer of assistance an honest one. I could not perceive how they could do otherwise. Strange, unnot lacking. Delia could be compelled to acknowledge that Rene was her child—she would scarcely dare deny this truth in face of my positive knowledge—and she, at least, must know that Judge Beaucaire had never during his lifetime given her her freedom. This fact could be established beyond question, and then they must surely all comprehend the necessity of immediate flight—that there remained no other possible means of escape from hopeless slavery. Desperate as the chance appeared, it was the only one.

It was a disagreeable, heart-rending task which I had taken upon myself, but it could be no longer avoided. It dawned upon me now with more intense force than ever before the position in which I stood, and I shrank from the ordeal. A perfect stranger, not even a chance acquaintance of those directly involved in this tragedy, I would have to drag out from the closet, where it had been hidden away for years, this old Beaucaire skeleton, and rattle the dried bones of dishonor before the horrified understanding of these two innocent, unsuspecting girls. I knew nothing of their characters, or of how they would meet such a revelation, and yet they must be made to see, and thoroly comprehend the situation; must be compelled to face the horror and disgrace of their position, and aroused to action. I had little thought then for the slave mother; doubtless she had been expecting some such exposure for years, and was, at least, partially steeled to meet it. But for the two girls, brought up as sisters, close companions since infancy, having no previous suspicion of the dreadful truth, this sudden revelation would be worse than death. Yet now concealment would be no kindness; indeed, the tenderest mercy I could show was to tell them in all frankness the whole miserable story of crime and neglect; and then point out to them the only remaining means of escape from the consequence of others' sins.

These thoughts, definite and compelling, flashed thru my mind as I stood there in the darkness, vainly seeking to distinguish the distant outlines of the great house, from one window alone of which the glow of light streamed. In that moment of decision the conviction came to me that I had best do this alone; that the presence of the negro would hinder, rather than help the solution of the problem. I must appeal directly to the intelligence, the courage, of those so deeply involved, and trust my own personality to win their confidence. In this the negro would be useless.

"Pete," I said, measuring my words, my plan of action shaping itself even as I spoke. "What lies in there between us and the house?"

"A truck patch mostly, wid a fence 'round it. Den thar comes som' flower beds."

"No path?"

"Well, I done reckon as how thar might be a sorter path, sah, but you'd hardly find it in de dark. De bes' way'd be ter sorter feel 'long de fence, 'til yer git sight o' de front porch."

"All right, then. I am going to leave you here while I scout around. Keep your eyes open, and have the mule ready to leave at any minute."

"'Bout how lon' yer be gone, sah?"

"I cannot tell you that. As short a time as possible. It may require considerable explanation and urging to get those three women to trust me. However, all you have to do is wait, and be sure that no one sees you. If you should be needed for anything at the house, I'll get word to you some way; and if I should send Delia and Rene out here alone, without being able to come with them myself, load them into the cart at once, and drive to the boat. I'll manage to join you somewhere, and the important thing is to get them safely away. You understand all this?"

"Yas, sah; leastways I reckon I does. I'se ter take keer ob dem all, an' let yer take keer o' yerself."

"Exactly, because, you see, I haven't the slightest idea what I am going to run up against. There may be others in the house, and I might not dare to leave Miss Eloise behind alone without some protection. In a way she is in almost as much danger as the others if she falls into Kirby's hands. I shall endeavor to induce her to go to Haines at once."

FOLLOWING some impulse I shook hands with him, and then plunged into the darkness, my only guidance at first that single ray of light streaming thru the unshaded window. The ground underfoot was roughly irregular, cleared forest land evidently, as I occasionally stumbled over an unremoved stump, altho there was nothing to seriously obstruct my passage until I reached the fence surrounding the garden. By this time the outlines of the house were plainly visible against the skyline beyond, and I realized that it was indeed quite a mansion for that country, a great square frame structure, two full stories in height, appearing black and deserted, except for that single window thru which the light continued to stream. While this window was upon the lower floor, directly opposite where I stood, and no great distance away, it was still sufficiently elevated above the ground, and obscured by a small outside balcony, so as to afford me no glimpse within. All I could distinguish clearly was the ceiling of what appeared to be a rather large apartment.

As I advanced along the fence, a low structure built of rough rails, and thus approached more closely to the front of the main building, other lights began to reveal themselves, enabling me to perceive that the inner hallway was likewise illuminated, altho not brilliantly. These dim lights proved sufficient, however to enable me to trace the general form of the broad veranda in front, with its high roof upheld by pillars of wood—doubtless giant forest trees—and also the wide wooden steps leading down to a circling carriage drive. In spite of previous descriptions I had scarcely anticipated encountering so fine a home in this land which to me was wilderness. The contrast of what life had undoubtedly been to its inmates, and what it would now become thru the medium of this unwelcome message I bore, struck me with new force. My mission became instantly a hateful thing, yet I only set my lips tighter, determined to end it as quickly as possible.

By groping about with my feet I succeeded in discovering the path of which Pete had spoken, and managed with difficulty to follow it slowly. Winding in


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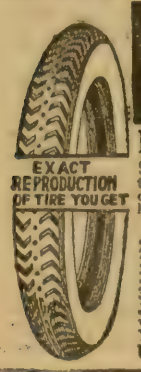


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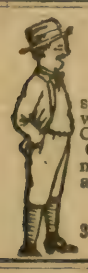

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and out amid shrubbery, and what may have been reserved for flower beds, this ended at a side door, which was locked. Discovering this fact, and that it resisted all efforts at opening, I turned once more toward the front, and advanced in that direction, securely hidden by the dense shadow of the house. All about me was silence, not even the sound of a voice or the flap of a wing breaking the intense stillness of the night. I almost imagined I heard the murmur of the distant river, but this was probably the night breeze sighing thru the tree branches. I came below the veranda, still in the deep shadow, utterly unconscious of any other presence, when suddenly, from just above me, and certainly not six feet distant, a man spoke gruffly, the unexpected sound of his strange voice interrupted by the sharp grate of a chair's leg on the porch floor, and a half-smothered yawn.

"Say, Sheriff, how long are we all goin' ter set yere, do yer know? This don't look much like Saint Louee afore daylight ter me."

I stopped still, crouching low, my heart leaping into my throat, and every nerve tingling.

"No, it sure don't Tim," replied another, and the fellow apparently got down from off his perch on the porch rail. "Yer see Kirby is bound he'll get hold o' them two missin' females furst, afore he'll let me round up the niggers."

"But yer told him yer wouldn't round the niggers up, an' stow 'em away in the boat."

"Not till I get service on the young lady. It wouldn't do no good."

"Whut's the idee?"

"Damned if I know exactly. All I know is whut I kin do accordin' ter law, an' whut I can't. The papers is all straight 'nough, but they've got ter be served afore we kin lay hands on a damned thing. The Jedge tol' me fer ter do everything just as Kirby sed, an' I aim ter do it, but just the same I got ter keep inside the law. I reckon thar's a hitch sumwhar', but thet's none o' my business. Kirby is liberal 'nough with his money, an' I dunno as it makes much difference when we strike the ol' town."

"'Tain't so much that, Sheriff. I kin stan' it fer ter be up all night, but Bill wuz tellin' me we might hav' som' trouble down ter the Landin' unless we finished up our job yere afore mornin'."

"Oh, I reckon not; whut was it Bill said?"

"Quite a rigmarole frum furst ter last. Giv' me a light fer the pipe, will yer?"

There was a flare above me, and then darkness once more, and then the slow drawl of the man's voice as he resumed. "Some feller by the name ov McAdoo, down ter Saint Louee, who's just com' down frum the lead mines, tol' him thet Joe Kirby got all this yere property in a game o' kyards on the boat, an' thet it wan't no square game either. I didn't git it all straight, I reckon, but accordin' ter the deal handed me thar wus two dead men mixed up in the affair—Beaucaire, an' a young Army officer. Seems ter me his name wus Knox."

"I didn't hear that."

"Well, enyhow, that's the way Bill told it. Beaucaire he naturally fell dead—heart, er som'thin'—an' the other feller, this yere Army man, he went out on deck fer ter see Kirby, an' he never cum' back. McAdoo sorter reckoned as how likely he wus slugged, an' throwed overboard. An' then, on top' all that, we're sent up yere in the night like a passel o' thieves ter take these niggers down ter Saint Louee. What do yer make ov it, Jake?"

"Wal," said the other slowly, his mouth evidently loaded with tobacco. "I ain't never asked no questions since I wus made sheriff. I'm doin' whut the court says. Hell! thar's trouble 'nough in this job without my buttin' in on other people's business. But this is how it stacks up ter me. Kirby's got the law on his side—no doubt 'bout that—but I reckon as how he knows it wus a damn mean trick, and so he's sorter skeered as ter how them fellers livin' down ter the Landin' might act. Thar's a lawyer thar named Haines, as sharp as a steel trap, who tended ter all the ol' Jedge's business, an' Joe he don't wanter run foul o' him. Thet's why we tied up ter the shore below town, in the mouth o' thet crick, an' then hed ter hoof it up yere in the dark. Of course we got the law with us, but we wanter pull this job off an' not stir up no fight—see?"

"Sure," disgustedly. "I reckon I know all that; I heerd the Jedge tell yer how we wus ter do the job. But why's Kirby in such a sweat ter git all these niggers down ter Saint Louee?"

"Ter sell 'em, an' git the cash. Onct they're outer the way there won't be no row. He'll let the land yere lie idle fer a year or two, an' by that time nobody'll care a whoop how he got it. But he's got ter get rid o' them niggers right away."

"Well, who the hell's goin' ter prevent? They're his'n, ain't they? Thar ain't no Black Abolitionists 'round yere, I reckon. I never know'd yer had ter run off your own niggers in the night, so's ter sell 'em down South. My Gawd, is this yere Mussury?"

"Seems sorter queer ter me," admitted the sheriff, "but I did get a little outer that feller Carver comin' up. He's a close-mouthed cuss, an' didn't say much, but puttin' it with what yer just told me, I reckon I kin sorter figger it out. Carver is som' sorter partner with Kirby—a capper I reckon—an' enyhow he had a hand in that kyard game. 'Tain't the niggers thet are makin' the trouble—leastways not the black 'uns. Nobody's likely ter row over them. It seems that Beaucaire kept a quadroon housekeeper, a slave, o' course, an' a while back she giv' birth ter a child, the father o' the infant bein' Judge Beaucaire's son. Then the son skipped out, an' ain't never bin heard frum since—dead most likely, fer all this wus twenty years ago. 'Course the child, which wus a girl, is as white as I am—maybe more so. I ain't never set eyes on her, but Carver he says she's damn good lookin'. Enyhow the Jedge he brought her up like his own daughter, sent her ter school in Saint Louee, an' nobody 'round yere even suspected she wus a nigger. I reckon she didn't know it herself."

"The hell you say."

"Yes, but that ain't all o' it. I don't know how it happened—maybe he forgot, er put it off too long, er aimed ter git revenge—but, it seems, he never executed no paper freein' either her or her mother."

"Yer mean the girl's still a slave?"

"Yer bet! That's the law, ain't it?"

"And Kirby knew about this?"

"I reckon he did. I sorter judge, Tim, frum whut Carver sed, that he wus more anxious fer ter git thet girl than all the rest o' the stuff; an' it's her he wants ter git away frum yere on the dead quiet, afore Haines er any them others down at the Landin' ka... catch on."

"They couldn't do nuthin'; if thar ain't no papers, then she's his, accordin' ter law. I've seen that tried afore now."

"Of course; but what's the use o' runnin' eny risk? A smart lawyer like Haines could make a hell ov a lot o' trouble just the same, if he took a notion. That's Kirby's idee—ter cum' up yere in a boat, unbeknownst to enybody, tie up down thar at Saunders', an' run the whole bunch o' niggers off in the night. Then it's done an' over with afore the Landin' even wakes up. I reckon the Jedge told him that wus the best way."

There was a moment of silence, the first man evidently turning the situation over in his mind. The sheriff bent across the rail, and spat into the darkness below.

"The joke of it all is," he continued with a short laugh, as he straightened up, "this didn't exactly work out 'cordin' ter shedule. When we dropped in yere we rounded up the niggers all right, an' we got the girl whar there's no chance fer ter git away——"

"Is that the one back in the house?"

"I reckon so; leastways she tol' Kirby her name was Rene Beaucaire, an' that's how it reads in the papers. But thar ain't no trace ov her mother, ner ov the Jedge's daughter. They ain't in the house, ner the nigger cabins. Whar the hell they've gone, I don't know, an' the girl won't tell. Leaves me in a


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deuce ov a fix, fer I can't serve no papers less we find the daughter. Her name's Eloise; she's the heir et law, an' I ain't got no legal right fer ter take them niggers away till I do. Looks ter me like they'd skipped out."

"Maybe som'body blowed the whole thing."

"I dunno who it wud be. Then whut did they leave thet girl behind fer? She'd most likely be the furst ter run—thar's Kirby an' Carver, a comin' now, an' they're alone; ain't got no trace ov 'em, I reckon."

Where I crouched in the shadows I could gain no glimpse of the approaching figures, but I heard the crunch of their boots on the gravel of the driveway, and a moment later the sound of their feet as they mounted the wooden steps. Kirby must have perceived the forms of the other men as soon as he attained the porch level and his naturally disagreeable voice had a snarly ring.

"That you, Donaldson? Have either of those women come back?"

"No," and I thought the sheriff's answer was barely cordial. "We ain't seen nobody. What did you learn down at the Landin'?"

"Nothing," savagely. "Haven't found a damn trace, except that Haines hasn't been home since before dark; some nigger came for him then. Is that girl safe inside?"

"Sure; just as you left her, but she won't talk. Tim tried her again, but it's no use; she wudn't even answer him."

"Well, by God! I'll find a way to make her open her mouth. She knows where those two are hiding. They haven't had no time to get far away, and I'll bring her to her senses before I am thru. Come on, Carver; I'll show the wench who's master here, if I have to kick her like a common nigger."

The front door opened, and closed, leaving the two without standing in silence, the stillness between them finally broken by a muttered curse.

**Even in days three-quarters of a century removed from us, dramas in the lives of men could and did take place. This intensely interesting one, cram full of unexpected developments as the story progresses, continues next week.**

* * *

## Must Have Been the English Monkey.

(Concluded From Page 2.)

Regions, must follow the long-established rules regarding admission to H—l. MANAGEMENT.
Offices—Left bank of Styx.

IT WAS plain to the Editor that there was no admission to this place of select people and ironclad rules unless one complied in every detail. So this time he did not lose his temper. With his hands glued to his thighs, where his pockets ought to have been, he tramped back along the road again, seeking this time to insure his candidacy beyond all doubt.

Pretty soon he found a pretty child tramping along, looking for the Pearly Gates. The child asked him in a lisping voice where the Pearly Gates were, and the Editor, pointing to the red glow in the sky, directed the child hence, knowing that the child must tramp uselessly several thousand miles until he was directed right. Then he met three more spirits in succession, two of which he knocked down and tore up their graveclothes, and the third of which, bigger than himself, he cunningly tripped and shoved into the black waters of the River Styx. Then he attended a spiritualist seance which was taking place on Earth, and, pretending to be the spirit of one of the foremost clergymen of our time, wrote out ridiculous words on the tied slates, slapped every one in the room on the nose, and started a graphaphone in the corner playing "There'll Be a Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight," after which he left the seance. From here he flitted to the Ledger offices, where M. M. T., the Editor-in-chief, was trying to do the Editor's work, and when M. M. T.'s back was turned, darn our hides if the Editor didn't first take out all the cracking good stories from the accepted files, put them in envelopes and send them back to the authors, and then smuggle out all the poor ones in the mail and slip them into the accepted files. And no one was any the wiser.

WITH this much accomplished, he started back to the Infernal Regions once more, stopping only once to rob a poor old woman, once a fortune-teller on earth, of her gravecloth and leaving her shivering in space. Reaching the Infernal Region, the door was flung open and the tall man peered out. This time he held in his hand a large white slip marked I 1713 E, and altho he thrust it into the Editor's hand, he did not bar the way.

The Editor, standing in the shaft of warm air that poured forth from the gate, and seeing far away thousands of spirits busily engaged in shoveling coal into large furnaces in which other plump spirits sat and heated themselves with expansive smiles on their faces, read it thru and smiled as he did so.

It ran:

Name: Editor of the Chicago Ledger.
Address (On Earth): 500 N. Dearborn Street.

Dear Sir:

Your spirit, tentatively arrayed in one gravecloth with initials H. S. K., is acceptable as a member of H—l for the period of 1,000,000 years. We reserve the right to equip you with the proper horns and tail, according to specifications drawn up in our offices, and to assign you to such department as we wish. It is understood that your wickedness is original in conception with yourself, and has not before been attempted by any other spirit. You secure immediate entrance of yourself upon presentation of this slip, and said entrance shall immediately make binding on our part the 1,000,000-year payment. Payment begins at once. If this offer is satisfactory, please sign this paper and hand to the gatekeeper.

MANAGEMENT H—L.
General Offices.

Candidate's signature .....

THE Editor, his teeth chattering, his whole being shivering to get in that cheerful assemblage where coal was plentiful and every one was warm, signed the slip quickly with a stick of burning sulphur, and hurried inside. Past the threshold he turned to the horned man who was just closing the door.

"By the way," he asked, "why did you take me this time? Was it because of that child I misdirected, or the old lady whose gravecloth I stole? Or perhaps it was on account of the seance where I impersonated the Reverend——" and he gave the reverend's name.

The tall man looked him over with admiration in his eyes. "My dear sir," he said, wringing the Editor's hand, "Those were merely children's stunts in cussedness, and have been done a million times before by people to get in here. The thing that fixed your case up with us was that stunt you pulled on the readers of the Chicago Ledger. Think of it, man! It was admirable! Giving 5,000,000 innocent readers poor stories when they had paid their money for good yarns, and then shifting the blame off to the Managing Editor."

The Editor, wringing the other's hand, hurried on to the nearest furnace. It was getting warmer now. And then—and then—he woke up and found that his wife was tucking him under the blankets which he had kicked off.

But, as we said in the beginning of this article, it must have been the English Monkey.

* * *

## The Dark Mirror.

(Continued From Page 9.)

and the latter, discreet, well-trained, and obviously unsuspicious, had not ventured a single question—had, indeed, betrayed the curiosity which must have been gnawing her very vitals by nothing more than a simple expression of her happiness to see "madame" safely "at home" again. . . .

A remote droning noise crept into the stillness of the evening so gradually that she noted it without any astonishment; but when, gaining in volume, it became recognizable as the sustained growl of a motor-car rapidly climbing the mountain road, she began to tremble.

The car swept swiftly across the far side of the clearing, swung into the drive that led to the garage, and disappeared. The throbbing of its motor was stilled. Impatient footsteps sounded on the gravel walk.

Her body was vibrating now like a reed. Almost the impulse was more strong than her will, to fly back to her bedchamber, lock herself in, refuse to see or speak to him. . . .

How could she face him and tell him the truth? How break his heart? And not his alone . . .

Running up the steps to the veranda, he saw her waiting in the shadows and cried out to her in the name of Leonora. She could not reply. Mental rehearsal of what her attitude at this meeting should be proved valueless. She had meant to guard against his arms with a decision, an authority, which must command respect and win her time enough to tell him; she was captive and powerless before she could lift a hand or voice one syllable of protest. The passion of his kisses, the murmuring of his voice, were overpowering. The quickened tumult of her pulses was like the storming of a strong surf. She loved him. . . .

Stunned, breathless, quivering, humiliated, she found that she had somehow contrived to put him from her. The pained perplexity in his gaze cut like a knife. She turned aside, that she might not see . . .

HE PROTESTED: "Leonora! What is it? What have I done? You are trembling—weeping! Have I hurt you—offended——"

"No," she sobbed—"no, no!"

"Then why——"

"Please—give me time, Mario——"

"Forgive me," he begged. "I have been inconsiderate, thoughtless, in the joy of having you restored to me! Forgive——"

"There is nothing to forgive," she interrupted. "You've done nothing that wasn't right and natural. Only. . . . Oh! how can I make you understand?"

He gave a helpless gesture. "Tell me what you wish me to understand; I will try. I love you so . . ."

Touched, she sought to smile kindly


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MRS. LENA McBROON, Woodbury, Tenn.

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The "More Eggs" Tonic did wonders for me. I had 29 hens when I got the tonic and was getting five or six eggs a day. April first I had over 1200 eggs. I never saw the equal. EDW. MEKKER, Pontiac, Mich.

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MRS. H. M. PATTON, Waverly, Mo.

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I never used "More Eggs" Tonic until last December; then just used one $1.00 package and have sold over $200.00 worth of eggs from 44 hens. "More Eggs" Tonic did it. A. G. THODE,
Sterling, Kans., R. No. 2, Box 47.

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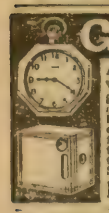
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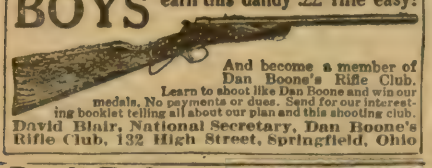
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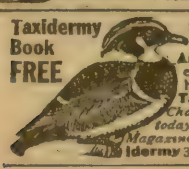
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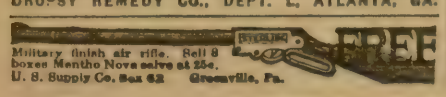

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"I was afraid, I dared not leave anything to chance. One could not foretell in what condition you would wake up. If anything had happened . . . I think another disappearance would have driven me insane!"

She avoided his eyes, and asked, rather mechanically, more to say something than out of desire to know:

"Why did you have to go down into the valley?"

"To telegraph New York and call off the detectives I had employed to look for you. Also to tell the villagers you were safely found, and thank them. They were most kind, those good people; fully half a hundred of them stayed up all night with me, while we searched the woods; and tho many had not had a wink of sleep, they were still searching yesterday afternoon when I despaired and determined to seek you in New York."

Thus reminded of the sad futility of that search, she was too deeply disturbed to wonder why he could not have telephoned to the village. . . .

The Japanese served their coffee in the living-room. It was now quite dark, and the air tho sweet was keen. The fire was burning, but the windows and door were not closed; and the faintly acrid smell of wood smoke blended pleasantly with the pungent perfume of the pines.

MARIO placed an easychair for Priscilla, made it easier with cushions for her back and head, offered her cigarettes—and showed surprise when she refused them—lighted one for himself and threw it away half-smoked, and knelt down beside her chair, resting his elbows on its arm and capturing one of her hands.

She tried to steel herself against the weakness of the flesh, the protests of her affections, the enervation of her sympathies, reminding herself she must be cruel to be kind. But it was terribly hard to hurt him as she must. It wasn't as if she didn't care. . . . The mere contact of his hand thrilled her heart to a faster tempo, quickening breath and pulses affected all her being with tremors of fear and gladness, made her infirm and weak of purpose. She had for him only a pathetic apology for a smile, a forlorn little shake of her head.

A deeper concern shadowed his face. He asked tenderly: "What is it, dear? You must tell me . . ."

"It's going to be so hard," she said, reluctantly, "to say what I must; I can't think how to begin, except in the bluntest way?"

"Is not that always the better way?"

"I don't want to hurt you . . ."

"Do not be afraid. Tell me frankly how I have failed you, in what respect I have fallen short——"

"But you haven't!"

"Then what it was I did to make you run away from me."

"I'm sure you could have done nothing——"

"Still, you ran away!"

"No—I didn't."

He remonstrated sharply: "Leonora!"

"I'm not," she declared desperately—"I'm not Leonora."

"What!"

"I am not your wife, Mario."

"One moment . . ." Clouded with doubt, his eyes challenged the candor of hers, but found it flawless. At a loss—"What are you saying?" he muttered.

"The truth," she affirmed. "Oh, I'm sorry, Mario, so sorry——"

"But I don't understand . . ."

She sat up, closing his hand within her own.

"I'm so sorry," she iterated; "but I must tell you, I can't avoid telling you; Leonora is dead."

He disengaged his hand and stood up sharply.

"Leonora!"

"Is dead. She was killed day before yesterday——"

"Are you out of your mind? Or am I?"

"Please listen—don't make it any harder than it is. Carnehan murdered Leonora while you were away, in town. You see, he wasn't killed in the fire, after all—he's alive. The identification of the body as his was a mistake—or a ruse to further his escape. I saw him last night. He was in that place——"

"I know Carnehan is not dead. But what is this nonsense you are trying to tell me?"

She repeated: "He killed Leonora. He met her——"

The man gave a gesture of exasperation.

"But one of us is mad!"

"No, Mario," she said gently—"neither of us——"

"But I see you—with my own eyes I see you sitting there, telling me this atrocious thing, that you are dead!"

"Not I, but Leonora——"

"But you are Leonora!"

"I tried, to begin with, to tell you I wasn't."

"But I see you—I tell you, I see you——"

"It's true, I believe, I look like Leonora——"

"Look like her?" He laughed shortly. "You are her!"

"But I am not," she persisted patiently. "Please, Mario, please listen to me before you question my sanity."

He was briefly silent, in a dazed stare, then made a sign of impatient deference thru her tears. "Give me a moment," she pleaded, tremulous hands busy with the disarray of her hair—"give me a little time, Mario——"

The mellow booming of a tubular gong sounded. Mario turned impatiently. Bowing and smiling, the Japanese boy stood in the entrance to the dining-room.

"Dinner is served."

By a resolute effort she succeeded in composing face and manner. Mario maintained an inquiring attitude, deferential, puzzled, hurt. Somehow she mustered a smile that only mystified him the more.

"Do something for me, Mario . . ."

"You know you need but ask."

"Let us have dinner. I think—I'm sure I'm hungry. And let us not talk during dinner, let's pretend nothing has happened. Afterwards, I promise you . . ."

"But it shall be as you wish—of course!"

### CHAPTER XLVII.
### THE IMPOSSIBLE.

SHE thought; never was there a meal more difficult, consumed under stranger circumstances in an atmosphere of greater constraint, never had two people broken bread together having more to say to each other and leaving more unsaid.

For her own part, she approached the table choking with emotion, thoroly persuaded she would be unable to eat a single mouthful. She was so sooner seated than aware that she was famished—and the romantic sentiments appropriate to the situation incontinently went by the board, she ate like the hungry and healthy young woman she was.

Nothing surprising about that; she had eaten little breakfast yesterday, no luncheon whatever; so that the tray of fruit, toast and tea which the maid had brought to her room while Priscilla was in her bath broke an actual fast of thirty-six hours' duration and served rather to whet than to blunt a lively appetite.

Furthermore the dinner, perfectly composed, cooked and served by the Japanese boy, was irresistible.

Opposite her, Mario barely tasted the dishes set before him. The careworn eyes in that dark, ascetic face watched her constantly if covertly. If she looked up from her plate, he dissembled studiously, his smile flashed eagerly. She was none the less conscious of his anxious expression when she was not looking—aware and distressed.

Conversation under such conditions was a sort of stilted farce, fitful, inconsecutive, inconsequential. Mario did his best to seem at ease and be amusing, but his silences were abrupt, frequent, and long, and his observations, deriving from matters with which Leonora may have been acquainted, now fell on uninstructed ears. Priscilla's undisguisable bewilderment at some of his references was to him bewildering. Naturally enough, he couldn't understand . . .

Nor was it altogether possible to avoid the topic uppermost in both minds.

"You slept well?" he inquired.

She smiled: "Famously!"

"I am glad. You show the benefit. I think you are even more beautiful than you were, more pale, perhaps, but—how does one say it?—spirituelle. But it may be I am not a fair judge; tonight I am so happy, I see all things couleur de rose."

His lean, brown hand stole across the cloth to cover hers for a moment. "And you—are you not glad, dear, to be home with me once more?"

She said, with difficulty, in a low voice, looking down at her plate:

"I am glad to be with you, Mario."

It was true; in spite of everything, she was strangely glad. But it was wrong of her to say so. . . .

"I myself slept till noon," he volunteered. "Then I waited and waited and waited for you to wake up, but you were sleeping like a child, you never stirred; one had not the heart to disturb you. Then, when it got so late, and I could no longer put off going down into the valley, I gave Martha instructions not to leave your bedside till I returned or you awakened."

She wondered: "Why?"


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to her wish. "Go on," he bade her thickly.

With what calm she could, but with resolution, she sought to win credulity from him by dint of repetition: "Leonora is dead. While you were away, day before yesterday, Carnehan found her here and killed her."

"How could that be, and the servants not know?"

"I only tell you what I know. I don't imagine Carnehan came to the house, I think he must have waylaid her, or met her by some accident, in the woods. I think Leonora was restless and lonely, unhappy without you, and wandered away during the afternoon, perhaps walked down the road toward evening, to meet you. If you remember, you promised to be home before dinner. And that gave Carnehan his opportunity for revenge. He trapped her and killed her—I don't know how—threw her body into a lake——"

"Enough!" Mario silenced her savagely. "It is not your sanity I question, but your good faith. How can you lie to me so abominably?"

"Ah, Mario!" she uttered sadly, "if I could only make you believe!"

"But why should you wish to? My God! what have I done, how injured you, that you should wish to break my heart!"

"I would rather mine broke, if it would save you this suffering."

He rounded on her in a fury which subsided as he perceived anew the unimpeachable honesty of her countenance.

"Your voice is sincere," he protested in amazement, "your look is kind . . . But how can I accept the testimony of my senses when I hear you lie?"

"I don't!" She got up to face him squarely on equal terms. "I would give anything—everything!—to be spared the necessity of saying things that hurt you so——"

"Another lie," he commented somberly. "You do not love me."

SHE was mute in fear lest she betray herself if she attempted to answer that.

"You no longer love me," he insisted, nodding morosely. "You thought you did for a time, no doubt; but it was not so, you had deceived yourself, you wearied of my love. . . . Then, at the first opportunity, you ran away from me, ran back to lose yourself from me in that life from which—in my vanity, I thought—my love had saved you."

Melancholy yielded to a surge of indignation. "And when I find you there, in that vile den, in peril of your life, and rescue you and bring you back, you thank me by making up this preposterous tale, with your own tongue you tell me to my face you are dead, you attempt to deny the fact of your own existence! What am I to believe, then? That my eyes do not see you, my ears do not hear your voice, my hands within these last few minutes have not touched your hands, of warm flesh and blood? That you are a vision, a creature of my imagination, a ghost? Ah, have done! A child would not attempt a deception so transparent."

He turned and moved away. "No, Leonora; you ask too much of my generosity!"

"Oh, I am sorry, so sorry, Mario!"

The artlessness of that reiterated cry brought him back.

"If that is so, if you wish me to believe you are sorry—then let us have an end to this madness; admit you are my wife."

She could only shake her head. . . .

He brooded with a fixed and sullen gaze.

"Why," he broke out furiously, "if you do not know me, how is it you know me so well? When, suspecting the truth—but never how hideous it was—I followed you back to New York yesterday; when I tramped for hours the streets where I had met and loved and wooed you and, as I thought, won your love; when at length I caught sight of Carnehan and dogged him from bar to bar, without his knowledge, until finally he reeled into that infamous place, and I, suspecting he might have had you imprisoned there, got a detail of police from the station round the corner; when we broke in, and I found you half demented with fear, and you saw me and came running to my arms; when that happened—if you were and are not Leonora—how did you know who I was, how came you at sight to cry out my name, Mario?"

She begged his charity with clasped hands.

"If you will only listen, I can explain."

With a curt nod he consented, turned his back to the fire, folded his arms. His eyes held a sardonic gleam.

"I am listening."

She made impulsively to speak, but uttered never a sound. Her heart misgave her. The story she must tell, if she were to explain, was even more preposterous than that which he was refusing to credit. It would only earn his deeper scorn. Her eyes turned blank, her face expressionless.

"I am waiting," he prompted.

She looked away, and drooped, discouraged, despondent.

"Forgive me," she said in a weak voice. "After all, I hardly know how to explain. I can only ask you to be kind—believe me when I tell you I'm not your wife, not Leonora."

His eyebrows climbed. "Who, then, am I to believe you are?"

"My name is Priscilla Maine, I——"

"I know no person of that name."

"No; we never met——"

"Still, you are well enough acquainted with me to use my Christian name at first sight of me—without even the formality of an introduction!"

She confessed sullenly: "I can't explain. It's impossible. But what I have told you is true. I am Priscilla Maine."

"And you, whom I have never met—you tell me—you knew so much about me that you knew I had gone to New York, promising to return in time for dinner, leaving my wife alone with the servants; you knew she had disappeared. Perhaps you knew even her?"

Overlooking the sarcasm, she declared: "As well as I know myself."

"At last!"—he offered her an ironic bow—"something I can believe!"

"You can convince yourself," she suggested, "if you will get New York on Long Distance, call Murray Hill two-three-six-one, and ask for Mrs. Trowbridge."

"Well, what then?"

"She will tell you her niece, Priscilla Maine, has been missing since last night."

"And what, pray, will that prove?"

"You may listen while I talk with her. Her replies will prove I am Priscilla Maine."

He shrugged. "But you know very well there is no telephone within ten miles of this camp."

In consternation she dropped back into her chair and sat, trying to think. Would it do any good to tell him the history of her dreams? Could she herself be convinced against her will by such a story?

The answer came from Mario.

"It is useless," he said wearily. "No; do not interrupt me. Say nothing more——"

"No, Leonora; I already understand too well. You do not love me; and since you have found it difficult to escape me, you invent this cock-and-bull yarn to spare my feelings. A mistaken kindness. No matter; you make your wish clear. I am to believe you think ybu are not my wife. So be it; I will believe that, but I can do so only at a price."

"Tell me what you mean."

"If I am to believe that you believe you are not Leonora, I must believe that you are mentally deranged." He pondered gravely: "It is possible terror and suffering have so worked upon you——"

"Mario!" she pleaded, "you can find out the truth if you'll take me to the nearest telephone—whether it's ten miles or fifty—now, tonight, in your motor car."

"It is too late. These good people hereabouts go early to their beds. Shall I disturb them for no other purpose than to humor a mad freak?"

"Then let me go——"

"Alone?"

"I'm not afraid."

"But I am afraid for you. Remember how I found you last night, in peril of your life. Shall I trust you again to run yourself into God knows what danger? You need not ask that of me, Leonora."

"What am I to do?" she cried, wringing her hands.

"Compose yourself. Go to your room, rest quietly for tonight. In the morning, possibly, you will feel better, or possibly you will see how futile it is to try to deceive me; you will want, perhaps, to tell me the truth."

"I have told you nothing else!"

"Then confess to the whole truth: You do not love me."

She was dumb.

A gust of rage shook him violently. Standing over her with hot eyes in a blazing face he raised quivering arms as if tempted to strike her.

"Confess!"

"I can't," she said sadly.

THE statement was like a slap to him, its sheer simplicity rendering it the more stupefying. He started, gaped, his arms fell then rose to seize her shoulders.

"What did you say?" he demanded, his voice breaking. "You love me?"

She nodded with swimming eyes and the quivering mouth of a child. He tried to draw her to him, but she held back.

"No, Mario—please!"

"But you have just admitted that you still love me!"

She endured his gaze with an adorable bravery.

"I have always loved you—ever since Leonora loved you—and as well."

"Then you still insist——?"

"I am not your wife, I have never seen you before tonight except——"

She stammered into silence. If it were humanly possible to render the situation more impossible than it was, she could achieve that by rounding out the phrase that had died on her lips—"except in dreams."

"Except——?"

"Please don't ask me. I can't tell you—not tonight. Tomorrow, perhaps. Mario; please be kind to me now, let me go."

His hands fell away from her shoulders. "Perhaps you are right," he said heavily. "If this goes on, I myself must go mad!"

"Then be pitiful to me, be still more kind. Take me to New York tonight, take me to my aunt, Mrs. Trowbridge ——"

"What?" His tone changed again, becoming thick with resentment and suspicion. "You are at that again? Undeceive yourself; it is useless. I cannot comprehend your motive . . . But, I forget, you are not yourself. You have not yet recovered, you need more rest. Go to your room, please. In the morn-


# Why Women Grow Old More Quickly Than Men

**Greater Percentage of Anaemia—Lack of Iron in the Blood—Among Women Makes Them Lose Much of Their Youth, Beauty and Former Attractiveness, and Become Fretful, Nervous and Run-down—**

**What Women Need Is Not Cosmetics or Stimulating Drugs But Plenty of Pure Red Blood, Rich In Iron.**

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Look for the woman who appears younger than a man of the same age and you will find the exception to that vast majority upon whom anaemia—lack of iron in the blood has fastened its grip and is gradually sapping the health, vitality and beauty which every woman so longs to retain. In most cases men safeguard their health better than women by eating coarser foods, being more out-of-doors and leading more active lives, thereby keeping their blood richer in iron and their bodies in better physical condition.

The very moment a woman allows herself to become weak, nervous and run-down she is placing a drain upon her whole system which overtaxes the power of the blood to renew wasted tissue and keep active the natural life forces of the body. There are thousands of women who are ageing and breaking down at a time when they should be enjoying that perfect bodily health which comes from plenty of iron in the blood, simply because they are not awake to their condition. For want of iron a woman at 30 may look and feel haggard and all run-down—while at 50 or 60 with good health and plenty of iron in her blood she may still be young in feeling and so full of life and attractiveness as to defy detection of her real age. But a woman cannot have beautiful rosy cheeks or an abundance of strength and endurance without iron, and physicians below have been asked to explain why they prescribe organic iron—Nuxated Iron—to help supply this deficiency and aid in building a race of stronger, healthier women.

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Among other physicians asked for an opinion was Dr. George H. Baker, formerly Physician and Surgeon, Monmouth Memorial Hospital, New Jersey, who says: "What women need to put roses in their cheeks and the springtime of life into their step is not cosmetics or stimulating drugs but plenty of rich pure blood. Without it no woman can do credit to herself or to her work. Iron is one of the greatest of all strength and blood-builders, and I have found nothing in my experience so effective for helping to make strong, healthy, red-blooded women as Nuxated Iron.

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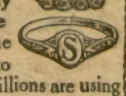

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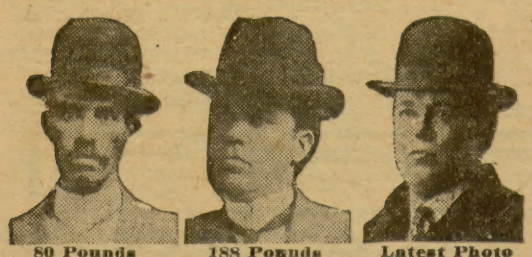

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"I forbid you to speak of it. Let me go!"

"Do you mean this, Mario? You refuse to give me a chance to prove to you——?"

"Absolutely."

"If not tonight, won't you promise to take me to New York tomorrow——?"

"You will stay here until you come to your senses. I have a right to know the truth—and I will have it out of you if it takes a year—or a lifetime!"

He turned his back. She moved toward her door.

"Good night," she said. He made no answer. She went on.

Of a sudden, with a choking cry, he overtook and crushed her to him. "Oh, my dear one!" he cried in agony, "to think what you have suffered to bring you to this pass!"

She was able to withhold response, to rest passive in his hold.

"You love me?"

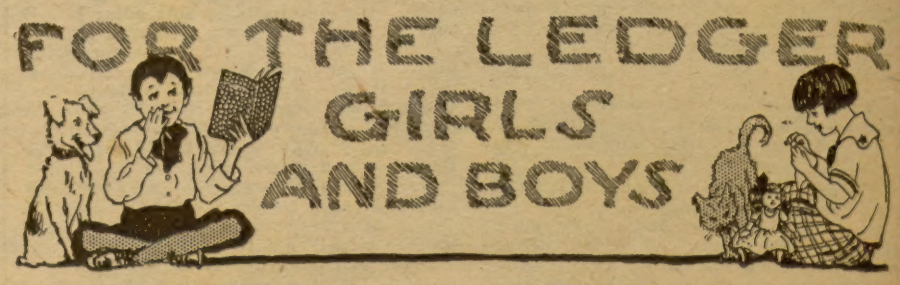
She made no answer. With a hand beneath her chin, he lifted her face to his, but her look discountenanced him, he hesitated.

"Please, Mario, not my lips—not again tonight—not till we understand each other better."

He let her go. She found herself on the threshold of the bedchamber. She looked back. To see him standing where she had left him, his arms slack, his head fallen forward, chin to chest, crushed by his vast disconsolation—that wrung her heart.

But what must be, must . . .

**Next week's instalment concludes "The Dark Mirror," in one of the most exciting and dramatic scenes occurring thus far in the story.**




# The Bottled Gourd

**BY PETTIS LEWIS MONTGOMERY.**

ONCE upon a time, a tiny gourd was placed in a large, round bottle, and the bottle secured to the fence over which the vine was growing.

When Little Gourd realized what had happened to him, he became almost sick with grief and despondency. Up to this time he had been as free as the air which he breathed. With no thought of hindrance he had been growing and spreading himself and, with the fine exuberance of youth, dreaming of the day when he should be as big as the biggest gourd on the vine! He wasn't sure just what he would be when he was fully grown; but, he would be something wonderful. He would serve some good purpose—would do something worth while.

"But now," he wailed, "I can do nothing—imprisoned in this great bottle!" Whereupon, he wept bitter tears of disappointment.

Just then a fat little worm came wriggling up the vine and, on reaching the big bottle, halted, peered cautiously over, and asked: "What's the trouble, Little Gourd?"

"Oh," cried Little Gourd, "yesterday I was as happy as you, and growing fast, and was joyfully planning what I should do when I grew up, when some one slipped this great bottle up around me; and, of course, now my whole life is ruined—or I'd rather be dead than living in a place like this."

Little Worm listened in silence. He had known trouble, too; but, thru patience and perseverance, had emerged from it all, a wiser worm, and a plucky little philosopher. Wriggling himself into a more comfortable position, he quietly asked: "Well, what are you going to do about it?"

"Do?" wailed Little Gourd, "there's nothing to be done! I'm simply 'done for,' that's all."

"Come now," said Little Worm," let me tell you my experience, and I think you'll change your mind."

"Only yesterday," he began, "while feeding in the garden, a great giant came slashing along with a hoe, and the next thing I knew, I was lying bruised, and almost unconscious, under a great load of earth! Well, I thought for a moment, it was all over for me. But I was smothering, and I determined I would get out to the air, if possible; so I went to work, boring straight up toward the light. Oh, I shall never forget the many disheartening things I met that retarded my progress! Once, I bumped into a hard clod of earth which I could not get thru, so I lost much time in boring my way around this; and often, I would prick my head terribly, on some sharp thorns that seemed to be all thru the soil; but I kept right on and, just as I thought I must be almost out, I butted into a rock that seemed to me as big as the world itself!"

Little Worm sighed, and went on with his story: "Well, I began boring slowly around that great stone. I knew I must get out to the air soon, or die. My strength was failing fast, when oh, joy of joys! I caught a glimpse of sunshine, and in another moment, I was out in the big world, as free as a bird, once more!"

* * * * * * *

Several weeks later a lady came out into the garden, and straight to the big gourd vine. Lifting the bottle, now filled almost to the bursting point with the full-grown gourd, she smiled, and gazed wonderingly at her treasure.

"Little Gourd," she bantered, "I shall have to change your name. For you have not only surpassed all the other gourds in size, but have taken the shape of this quaint, and really pretty bottle, and will be a wonder to all who behold you!" Clipping the gourd from the parent stem, she gently tapped the bottle against the ground, so that it broke and fell away from the quaint, green fruit.

"You shall be made into a dipper," said the lady. "You shall be called the Wonder Cup, and shall hang over the spring by the side of the road, where you may have the honor of real service to mankind."

"Bravo! It pays to keep a kickin'!" chimed all the other gourds in unison.

### A Conscientious Lad.

"TOM!" roared the shopkeeper.

"Here, sir," replied the lad, as he appeared from behind a pile of boxes.

"Take this parcel and run off to the station!" ordered his employer. "You'll have to hurry. The next train goes in ten minutes and I've promised the customer to have his order out this afternoon. And, Tom"——he fumbled in his pocket—"you'll be out late so here's a quarter for your fare and a quarter for your supper."

With a sigh of relief, he saw the boy disappear round the corner. At the rate the lad was going he'd catch the train all right. But ten minutes later his jaw dropped as he saw the boy coming casually back.

"Why, what's the matter?" he gasped furiously.

"P-p-please, sir," replied Tom, "I forgot which quarter was for my ticket and which was for my supper."

### Getting 'Round Pa.

"I AM awfully sorry, papa," said Bobby, "to think how much trouble I give mamma."

"She hasn't complained, has she?"

"No, she's very patient. But she often sends me to shops for things and they are a good way off, and I know she gets cross waiting when she's in a hurry."

"Not often, I fancy."

"Oh, she's nearly always in a hurry. She gets everything all ready for the baking and finds at the last moment she has not any yeast, or something, and then she's in an awful fright and I can't run a long distance, you know, and—I feel awfully sort for poor mamma."

"Humph! Well, what can we do about it?"

"I was thinking, papa, that perhaps you might get me a bicycle."

### Caught.

"EMMA," asked father, "do you practice on the piano while I am away at work?"

"Yes, father, every day," replied the girl.

"How long did you practice today?"

"Three hours."

"Well, I'm glad to hear that you are so regular, and the next time you practice be sure to unlock the piano; here is the key. I locked the instrument last week and have been carrying the key in my pocket ever since."

### A Darwinian Disciple.

"NOW, children, what did man descend from?" asked the teacher.

"Monkeys," replied the bright boy.

"And what did monkeys descend from?"

"Trees, madam," he replied, quickly.

### Just as She'd Finished.

MARJORY (before getting into bed)—Mamma, I forgot something I wanted to say in my prayers. Shall I say P. S.?

# CLASSIFIED WANT ADS

**Information**—The rate for one insertion in The Saturday Blade and one insertion in the Chicago Ledger is 35 cents a word, minimum 14 words, less 3% for cash. Each initial and group of figures is counted as a word, and the name and address are also counted. This is the minimum rate; neither more nor less is charged, irrespective of size or number of insertions. An ad may appear in both publications of the same week, or in the Blade of one week and the Ledger of the next.

W. D. BOYCE CO., Publisher, 500-514 N. Dearborn St., CHICAGO.

## SALESMEN WANTED

**WERE YOU EVER OFFERED A GROCERY** store? You can handle sugar, flour, canned goods, dried fruit, coffee and entire line of groceries, as well as paints, roofing, aluminum ware and automobile oils, with no rent to pay; no money invested; take large orders from samples. Goods are guaranteed and proven quality. Selling experience not necessary. Steady, profitable work for "workers." Address Hitchcock-Hill Co., Dept. 218, Chicago, Ill. Reference: Any bank or Express Co.

**SALESMEN: EARN $3,500 TO $10,000 A** year. City or traveling. Experience unnecessary. Quickly qualify through our amazing system. Free employment service to members. Send for salesmanship book, list of lines and full particulars. Nat. Salesmen's Tr. Ass'n., Dept. 103R, Chicago, Ill.

**SALESMAN—SIDE OR MAIN LINE, TO** sell low priced 6,000 mile guaranteed automobile tires, 30x3½ non-skid sells for $13.95; other sizes in proportion. Good money making proposition for live wires. Master Tire Co., 1414 S. Michigan, Chicago.

## AGENTS WANTED

**BIGGEST MONEY-MAKER IN AMERICA.** I want 100 men and women quick to take orders for raincoats, raincapes and waterproof aprons. Thousands of orders waiting for you. $2.00 an hour for spare time. McDonough made $813.00 in one month. Nissen $19.00 in three hours. Purviance $207.00 in seven days. $5,000 a year profit for eight average orders a day. No delivering or collecting. Beautiful coat free. No experience or capital required. Write quick for information. Comer Manufacturing Co., Dept. B-161, Dayton, Ohio.

**AGENTS: $72 A WEEK SELLING OUR NEW** Can't Clog Burner. Burns coal oil—cheapest fuel known. Fits any stove. Most perfect burner ever invented. Can't clog up. Heats oven to baking point in 10 minutes. Big seller. Big demand. Scarcity and high price of coal makes it sell everywhere. Write quick for agency and sample. Parker Mfg. Co., 209 Mat St., Dayton, Ohio.

**AGENTS—BEST SELLER; JEM RUBBER** Repair for tires and tubes; supersedes vulcanization at a saving of over 800 per cent.; put it on cold, it vulcanizes itself in two minutes, and is guaranteed to last the life of the tire or tube; sells to every auto owner and accessory dealer. For particulars how to make big money and free sample, address Amazon Rubber Co., Philadelphia, Pa., Dept. 704.

**ENORMOUS PROFITS SELLING MADAME** Lily's Marcellene hair dressing and skin whitener soap to colored people. Takes like wild fire everywhere. Constant repeater. Cash in on some of this easy money. Write for our attractive proposition. Sent free. Address Tono-Scalpa Co., Inc., 1331 E. Franklin St., Richmond, Va.

**AGENTS—SNAPPIEST HOUSEHOLD LINE** on earth, red hot sellers; every housewife uses them. Steady repeat orders. Territory going fast. $5.00 set of samples sent for $2.00. Particulars free. Write today. London Specialty Manufacturers, 251 Wortley Road, London, Canada.

**BIG MONEY AND FAST SALES. EVERY** owner buys gold initials for his auto. You charge $1.50; make $1.35. Ten orders a day. Write for particulars and free samples. American Monogram Co., Dept. 104, East Orange, N. J.

**TIRE AGENTS. EXCLUSIVE REPRESEN-** tatives to use and sell the new Mellinger Extra-Ply Tires. (No seconds.) Guarantee bond 8000 miles. Wholesale prices. Sample sections furnished. Mellinger Tire Co., 973 Oak, Kansas City, Missouri.

**AGENTS: $50 A WEEK TAKING ORDERS** for guaranteed hosiery for men, women and children. Must wear 12 months or replaced free. All styles and finest line of silk hose. Write for sample outfit. Thomas Mfg. Co., Class 211, Dayton, Ohio.

**POCKET CASH REGISTER—NEW WHIRL-** wind seller. $1.50 secures agency and sample postpaid. Subtracts as coin is withdrawn. Shows cash on hand. Place for each coin. Both sexes use and sell. Superior Service, Boston Block, Minneapolis.

**AGENTS—BIGGEST 20c SELLER. ORDERS** come to you every week. Profits very big. New selling plan free. No experience necessary. The Poflow Co., Dept. 52, 25 E. 26th St., New York City.

**AGENTS—A NEW ONE! HARPER'S FIBRE** broom and Ten-Use brush set combined. Saves broom expense; lightens housework; easy seller; first order returnable. Harper Brush Works, Dept. B, Fairfield, Iowa.

**AGENTS—LARGE MANUFACTURER WANTS** agents to sell hosiery, underwear, shirts, dresses, skirts, waists, shoes, clothing, etc. Write for free samples. Madison Mills, 503 Broadway, New York.

**SELL INSYDE TYRES, GENUINE INNER** armor for auto tires; double mileage; prevents punctures and blowouts; tremendous demand. American Accessories Company, Dept. T-450, Cincinnati, Ohio.

**AGENTS—MAKE A DOLLAR AN HOUR.** Sell Mendets, a patent patch for instantly mending leaks in all utensils. Sample package free. Collette Mfg. Co., Dept 707-C, Amsterdam, N. Y.

**350% PROFIT. QUICK SELLER. KLEAN-** Rite Magic Washing Compound. Washes clothes without rubbing. Sells 25c. You make 19c. Samples free. Bestever Products Co., 2253-L, Belle Plaine, Chicago.

**PORTRAIT AGENTS—A NEW PORTRAIT.** Something entirely different. Write for particulars, also catalogue and price list. Fidelity Portrait Company, Dept. 105, 3047 Harrison St., Chicago, Ill.

**AGENTS, $40 TO $100 A WEEK. FREE** samples. Gold sign letters anyone can put on store windows. Liberal offer to general agents. Metallic Letter Co., 431 M, North Clark, Chicago.

**MAKE $5.00 HOUR SELLING "COLUMBUS** Raincoats" to your friends. Miller made $30.00 first day spare time. Big profits. Sample free. Act quick! Columbus Raincoat Mfg. Co., Dept. 502, Columbus, Ohio.

**AGENTS—I AM PAYING $2.00 AN HOUR** for taking orders for complete new line of household necessities. Write quick for particulars. Albert Mills, General Manager, 2456 American Bldg., Cincinnati, O.

**MEN AND WOMEN: SEND NO MONEY** for my mail order propositions on approval. If not satisfactory return. Address: Hazen A. Horton, Dept. A, Marshall, Mich.

## AGENTS WANTED—(Continued)

**LYNER TYRES, GENUINE INSIDE TYRE** protectors, guaranteed against blowouts and punctures. Big profits. Pelletier Rubber, Box 780, Chicago.

**AGENTS—NEW PATENTED CURTAIN ROD,** necessity in every home; big profit; 4 to 10 sales at every house. Write for free sample. Home Curtain Rod Co., Providence, R. I.

**AGENTS: SELL NEVERFAIL IRON RUST** and stain remover. Huge profits. Big line. Sample. Write to-day. Sanford-Beal Co. Inc., Dept. 8, Newark, N. J.

**AGENTS — I'VE A NEW SOAP GAME** that's a dandy. New stuff; 100% profits. Sample and full layout free. Write quick. Lacassian Co., Dept. 21, St. Louis, Mo.

**GUARANTEED HOSIERY SELLING FROM** mill earns $8.00 to $12.00 a day for our representatives, all or spare time. Credit. E. Weber Mills, Nicetown, Phila., Pa.

**AGENTS—OUR SOAP AND TOILET AR-** ticle plan is a wonder. Get our free sample case offer. Ho-Ro-Co., 125 Locust, St. Louis.

**TOILET SOAP AGENTS MAKE BIG MONEY.** Spare time. Sample free. Finch, Grand Rapids, Mich.

## HELP WANTED

**HUNDREDS RAILWAY MAIL CLERKS** wanted by Government. Men-women over 17, $135-$200 month. Permanent. List positions free. Write immediately. Franklin Institute, Dept. D 26, Rochester, N. Y.

## MALE HELP WANTED

**RAILWAY TRAFFIC INSPECTORS EARN** from $110 to $200 per month and expenses. Travel if desired. Unlimited advancement. No age limit. We train you. Positions furnished under guarantee. Write for booklet CM-12, Standard Business Training Institute, Buffalo, N. Y.

**DETECTIVES EARN BIG MONEY. TRAVEL.** Great demand everywhere. Experience unnecessary. We train you. Particulars free. Write American Detective System, 1965 Broadway, New York.

**FIREMEN, BRAKEMEN, FOR RAILROADS** nearest their homes—Everywhere, $250-$300 monthly, experience unnecessary. (Which position?) Railway Association, Brooklyn, N. Y.

**AGENTS: WE WANT 1 RELIABLE AGENT** in your district to introduce a noncompetitive necessity to homes and dealers. We help you become a sanitary expert. Ideal Disinfectant Corp., 402 West 35th St., New York.

**FIREMEN, BRAKEMEN, BAGGAGEMEN,** $140-$200; colored porters by railroads everywhere. Experience unnecessary. 686 Ry. Bureau, East St. Louis, Ills.

**BE A DETECTIVE, $50-$100 WEEKLY;** travel over world; experience unnecessary. American Detective Agency, 300 Lucas, St. Louis.

**AUTO EXPERTS WANTED. $45 WEEK.** Earn while learning. Sample lessons free. Franklin Institute, Dept. D 804, Rochester, N. Y.

**MEN—AGE 17 TO 45. EXPERIENCE UN-** necessary. Travel; make secret investigations, report. Salaries; expenses. American-Foreign Detective Agency, 126, St. Louis.

**MEN WANTED FOR DETECTIVE WORK.** Write J. Ganor, former Govt. detective, 100 St. Louis, Mo.

**BOYS! TOY AIRPLANE FREE FOR POST-** ing eight signs. Write, Box 74, Arcade, Columbus, Ohio.

**GOVERNMENT CLERKS NEEDED BADLY** (men-women), $1,600-$2,300. No experience. Write Ozment, 106, St. Louis.

**BE A DETECTIVE. EXCELLENT OPPOR-** tunity, good pay, travel. Write C. T. Ludwig, 320 Westover Bldg., Kansas City, Mo.

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**LADIES WANTED, AND MEN, TOO, TO AD-** dress envelopes and mail advertising matter at home for large mail order firms, spare or whole time. Can make $10 to $35 weekly. No capital or experience required. Book, explaining everything, mailed for 10c to cover postage, etc. Ward Publishing House, Tilton, N. H.

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**SUFFERERS FROM KIDNEY AND BLAD-** der trouble, causing backache, nervousness, tired and worn out feeling, frequent desire to urinate, smarting and burning. Do not suffer any longer but write us for free symptom blank and advice. Hinze Medical Institute, 22 Washington Ave. So., Minneapolis, Minn.

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## PATENTS

**INVENTORS DESIRING TO SECURE PAT-** ent should write for our guide book, "How to Get Your Patent." Send model or sketch and description for our opinion of its patentable nature. Randolph Co., Dept. 174, Washington, D. C.

**INVENTORS—MY CLIENTS KNOW EVERY** step taken in prosecuting their applications. Booklet sent free on request. Warner Cubberly, 23-A National Union Bldg., Washington, D. C.

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**$5,000 YEARLY INCOME PAID THOUSANDS** of people who invested in Texas oil lands. They made the start. $2 may start you making $200 monthly, possibly more. You get warranty deed to land with interest in well and participating interest in entire subdivision. Results count. Bank reference; established facts free. Write today. Sourlake Texas Oil Co., 308 DeMenil, St. Louis, Mo.

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**GOOD LAND ON CREDIT. IN MICH. BEST** hardwood counties. Big money in grain, stock, poultry, fruit. 10 to 160 A. Only $15 to $35 per A. Good towns, schools, churches. Small down payment; easy mo. terms. Your credit is good. Big booklet free. Swigart Land Co., X1245 First Nat'l Bank Bldg., Chicago, Ill.

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## PERSONAL—(Continued)

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**MEN WHO ARE LOSING OUT IN LIFE** can find a marvelous remedy and complete restoration in 808 Tablets—the wonderful 48-hour medicine. Different from anything ever heard of. Holds world's record. $1 per box. Particulars and wonderful testimonials free. 808 Chemical Co., Dept. G, Pittsburg, Kansas.

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**MARRY; MOST SUCCESSFUL "HOME** Maker;" hundreds rich; confidential; reliable; years' experience; descriptions free. "The Successful Club," Box 556, Oakland, California.

**MARRY FOR PROSPERITY, HAPPINESS.** Hundreds wealthy. Best, most successful. Write, be convinced. Confidential. Descriptions free. Mrs. Budd, Box 753, San Francisco, California.

**EXCHANGE PLOTS FOR $$$$. PHOTOPLAY** ideas accepted any form; revised, typed, published. Sold. Advisory service free. Universal Scenario Corporation, 232 Western Mutual Life Bldg., Los Angeles, Cal.

**MAN OF HEALTH, WEALTH AND RE-** finement, would consider marriage. Learn more. Write Mr. J. S., Box 684, Dennison, Ohio.

**MARRY—MARRIAGE DIRECTORY WITH** photos and descriptions free. Pay when married. The Exchange, Dept. 28, Kansas City, Mo.

**MARRY — FREE PHOTOS, BEAUTIFUL** ladies; descriptions and directory; pay when married. New Plan Co., Dept. 21, Kansas City, Mo.

**BROTHER AND SISTER, AGES 28 AND 24,** must marry soon to inherit $100,000. Interested in matrimony? Write Box 749, Chicago, Illinois, enclosing stamped envelope.

**CATHOLICS WISHING TO MARRY, WANT-** ing introductions. Booklet free. Catholic Correspondence Club, S. D., Grand Rapids, Mich.

**319 NAMES, ADDRESSES, DESCRIP-** tions, also pictures, lonesome, marriageable people, 25c. Box 3317B, Boston, Massachusetts.

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**GET MARRIED—BEST MATRIMONIAL PA-** per published mailed free. Address American Distributor, Suite 215, Blairsville, Pennsylvania.

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**MARRY RICH. LARGEST AND BEST MAT-** rimonial paper published. Copy sent free. Feminine Review, 22 Quincy St., Chicago.

**GENTLEMAN, 35, WORTH $30,000, DESIRES** early marriage. P-Box, 325 Cor. Club, Ft. Wayne, Ind.

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**GET MARRIED — MANY WEALTHY** clients desiring early marriage. Address Opal Club, Box 92, Rosiere, N. Y.

**MARRY! FREE DIRECTORY WITH DE-** scriptions and photos. Bonafide Co., Dept. 5, Kansas City, Mo.

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**WIDOW, 39, HAS $16,000, WOULD MARRY.** B-Box 35, League, Toledo, Ohio.

# Only 4½¢ a lb. for SUGAR

Think of it—sugar only 4½c a pound from the Big 4 Company, when grocers are asking three times as much. Also see our wonderful big catalog for other groceries at savings you simply must not miss. Send right now for the trial order listed here, which actually saves you $1.20. Send for it quick and we will also send the great bargain catalog showing many other astounding grocery bargains. And if you send NOW you get in on our great **FREE** offer of One Dozen Triple Plate Spoons.

Just think of it—these spoons come to you as a gift—absolutely FREE with your order. A whole dozen of this beautiful "DAISY" pattern. All heavily triple plated—the kind that you will be proud to use on any and all occasions.

## Trial Order No. 18

**Big 4 Wholesale Prices**

| | |
|---|---|
| 2 pounds Granulated Sugar | $0.09 |
| 1 bar Fels Naptha Soap | .04 |
| 1 bar Sweetheart Soap | .04 |
| ½ pound Big4Brand Best Coffee | .18 |
| ¼ pound pure Cocoa | .13 |
| 1 pound pure Baking Powder | .48 |
| 1—4.oz. Bot. Vanilla Flavor Extract | .52 |
| 1 box Powdered Bluing (equal to about 2 gal. average best bluing) | .41 |
| 1 box Majic Dye Soap Flakes | .10 |
| Total | $1.99 |

**(YOU SAVE $1.20)**

**One Dozen Spoons Worth $1.50 FREE** *with above order*

Yes **FREE**—a dozen fine triple plate teaspoons, handles richly embossed. Worth $1.50. Special offer of 100,000 dozen to bring new customers. You get these handsome spoons free if you order quick. Nothing to pay for the spoons now or later. But you must order at once to be sure of getting them.

## Catalog Bargains

Remember that with your first order you get a free copy of our big wholesale catalog, which saves you money on all your grocery purchases. Here are just a few catalog specials. Sold in wonderful money-saving combinations.

**Flour** Per Barrel **$7.98** **Quaker Oats** Large Package **4c**

**Uneeda Biscuits** 12 Packages for **35c**

***Every Purchase a REAL Rock Bottom Bargain***

**Rush** trial order at once and get our wholesale grocery catalog (and 12 spoons free) in which you will find many of the most startling grocery bargains ever offered.

**References** We are one of the leading Wholesale Grocers in Chicago. Our bank, Foreman Bros. Banking Co., or any mercantile institution in Chicago, can tell you about us.

**We Guarantee** you absolute satisfaction or your money back. In every instance you get pure, fresh goods of the very highest quality. Send the coupon for the trial order today.

## Mail Coupon Now

Our low prices merely indicate what you can now save on all your groceries, a full line of which is listed in our Wholesale Catalog—**The Big Money Saver.** This catalog sent to customers only. A FREE copy will be sent with your first order. Send this coupon **NOW.**

**Big 4 Company**

**112 North May Street Dept. 1288 Chicago, Illinois**

**TRIAL ORDER COUPON**

**Big 4 Co. 112 N. May St. Dept. 1288 Chicago**

Gentlemen: Enclosed find $1.99, for which send me at once your Trial Order No. 18, and **12 Spoons FREE**, also a copy of your wholesale Grocery Catalog, free. It is understood that if I am not satisfied, I may return the order at your expense and you will return my money at once.

Name.....

Address.....

Post Office.....

Express Office.....

# To-Day

Don't Put Off Sending Your Order. This is a Special Offer. May be Withdrawn Any Time. Send While You Can Get the Spoons FREE.